GRITOS DE LA FRONTERA: GIVING VOICE TO TEJANO CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE FORMATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS, 1700-1850.

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The intent of this thesis is to convey the distinctiveness and the contributions of Tejano culture in Texas. It focuses on the traditions of governance employed by Tejanos as well as their contributions to industry, economy and defense that Texas benefited from and still enjoys today.

In addition, this thesis will examine how the limited support and attention given by Spain and México to Tejanos in establishing their settlements affected the development of a distinct Tejano culture. Furthermore, this study will also examine Anglo-Tejano interaction and Anglo American intentions toward Texas. It will also outline how Anglo Americans made determine efforts to wrest Texas away from Spain and México. Finally, the thesis examines Tejano cultural perseverance whose indelible imprint still resonates today.

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Courtesy of Gerald E. Poyo, *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850*

CHAPTER 1

FORMATION OF TEXAS

Introduction

Until recently, the historical literature available on Texas and its description of the early population, primarily Mexicans living in Texas, has been formulated within a Euro-American perspective. Most of these accounts place emphasis on the immigration and subsequent colonization of the territory by Anglo immigrant families moving westward from the United States. The majority of Anglo-Americans who came to Texas originated from west of the Appalachians and south of the Ohio River, with Louisiana, Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri, Mississippi, Georgia, and Kentucky being strongly represented.[1] This Euro-centric perspective produces a history of Texas and its inhabitants that affirms a social narrative of manifest destiny and racialized conquest that ultimately removes or negates the importance of *Tejano* contributions to the formation of Texas' social, political, and governmental institutions as we know them today.

Recent research has uncovered a wealth of information that places *Tejanos* in a different light.[2] Within the last 17 years, Mexican American authors

[1] Arnoldo De León, *The Tejano Community, 1836-1900*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), p. 11.
[2] Alwyn Barr, *Texans in Revolt: The Battle for San Antonio, 1835*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); Manuel Barrera, *Then the Gringos Came—The Story of Martín de León and the Texas Revolution*, (Laredo, TX.: Barrera Publications, 1992); Paul D. Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience: A Political and Social History, 1835-1836*, (College Station: Texas

have begun to give *Tejanos* the centrality they deserve in early Texas history. Tejano, the Spanish word used to describe the people of the region, is more than just an affiliation with the State of Texas. Raúl Ramos succinctly uses the word to identify the political and national identity of the citizens dating back to the Spanish colonial period. [3] The shifting politics of identification gave added significance to the word Tejano at different points in time in Texas history. Through it all, Tejano identity was forged from living in the remote *despoblado* between emerging México, the expanding United States and the territorial expanse of the Indian nations.[4] These studies by Mexican American authors reveal that Tejano settlements were not only self-sufficient borderland communities, they were sophisticated and highly evolved economic and political structures that were the result of successful Spanish institutions implanted in the New World. This thesis brings these works together to form a concise history of these contributions, their origins, and the struggles Tejanos endured in creating a region that continues today as the second most populous state in the United States.

A&M University Press, 1992); Ana Carolina Castillo Crimm, "Success in Adversity: The Mexican Americans of Victoria County, Texas 1800-1880" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1994); Jesús F. De la Teja, *San Antonio de Béxar: A Community on New Spain's Northern Frontier*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995); Jesús F. De la Teja, *A Revolution Remembered: The Memoirs and Selected Corrspondence of Juan Seguín*, (Austin, TX.: State House Press, 1995); Arnoldo De León, *The Tejano Community, 1836-1900*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982); Andrés Anthony Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas under the Mexican Flag*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1994).

[3] Raúl A. Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano: The roots of borderlands ethnicity, nationalism, and political identity in Béxar, 1811-1861" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1999), pp.2-3.

[4] Gerald E. Poyo, ed., *Tejano Journey, 1770-1850*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), p. xiii; Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," pp.2-3; Tejano and Mexicano are synonymous and will be used interchangeably in this work.

Chapter 1 provides a macro, or more global, overview of first Spain's, and then Mexico's, neglect of Texas that resulted in the sparse population of the northern *frontera* for over two centuries, from the first Spanish contact in the 1670s to Mexican struggles for independence in the 1800s. By the early nineteenth century, after years of valuable service by Tejanos in defending the borders of their territory for the Spanish and Mexican authorities, the region was under-populated, destitute, and defenseless. It was at this crucial juncture that the idea by the Tejano elite of allowing Americans to settle in Texas began to take hold. For the Spanish and ensuing Mexican officials, the notion of allowing Anglo Americans to settle in the northern fringes of their empire was viewed with a jaundiced eye. Yet, the Tejano elite, who considered themselves cultural brokers between Anglos and the governing authorities, perceived the Anglo colonization as a necessary evil for the survival of the region and their traditional way of life, and thus lobbied adamantly for their inclusion in Texas development. This would prove to be an important element in the population and development of Texas land but a detriment to Tejano life.

The following chapter, Chapter 2, examines Anglo American intentions toward Texas, an issue that has dominated Anglo-Tejano interaction for the last 150 years. Specifically, this chapter will outline how Anglo Americans made determined efforts to wrest Texas away from Spanish and Mexican control and into U.S. control. Anglo Americans, not content to be governed by a people and a political system they believed fraught with superstitious people and archaic social structures, sought to undermine the agreements under which they entered

Texas territory. In fact, Anglos never intended to enter Texas as citizens of Mexico despite their pretense and early negotiations but rather, they viewed themselves as the first of many settlers who would prefer to follow a belligerent course towards secession from the Mexican Republic with the hope of one day uniting Texas with the United States.

Chapter 3 moves the conversation from a history of Texas settlement to the specific contributions Tejanos made in forming a politically and economically sound and productive region out of once neglected frontier lands. This chapter discusses how frontier settlements in Texas were structured around Spanish traditions of governance that were based on Roman codes of law and plans for civil order**.** These Roman traditions took hold in Spain around the fifth century A.D. and after the Spanish reconquest of their lands from the Moorish influence in the early 1400s, became so well grounded in Spanish thought that Spanish monarchs confidently used these concepts to colonize the New World in 1522 and Texas two hundred years later.[5] Thus**,** frontier settlements in Texas carried with them successful and established customs and traditions of local governance, law and dispute settlement, town planning, and community defense dating back to the Roman conquest of Spain. This chapter also briefly describes how the limited support and attention given by Spain to Tejanos in the early formation of Tejano settlements outlined in chapters 1 and 2 affected the development of a distinct Tejano culture.

[5] Gilberto R. Cruz, *Let There Be Towns: Spanish Municipal Origins in Texas and the Southwest, 1610-1810*, with a foreword by Donald C. Cutter, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, c1988), p. 5.

As outlined in Chapter 1, the state-of-affairs of the citizens of Texas was a low priority for the Spanish court during the early 18th and 19th centuries. At times, the Crown's regard for Texas was, at best, perfunctory. This lack of attention and support left the Northern Provinces vulnerable to foreign encroachment for over a century. It was only when France began establishing colonies along the coastal areas around the Gulf of México at the turn of the 18th century that Spain felt threatened and started to pay closer attention to the Texas province. But even then, Spain's attention waxed and waned according to the perceived threat by France and other foreign interlopers. Texas would often be relegated to secondary importance during times of peace and cost saving measures rather than capital infusion to the borderlands would be recommended as Spain did not see Texas as a lucrative area for development. In the eyes of Spain the region of Texas was a territorial point of power used as a buffer zone to protect the interior of New Spain, which provided unlimited bounty for its royal coffers, but was not viewed as an economically important asset. This precedent of neglect, established by the Spanish crown, would continue with the nascent Mexican Republic. This neglect, however, did not hamper the spirit of the Tejanos as they set out to develop the northern province on their own.[6] This chapter focuses on the introduction of the town council or *cabildo* by Spain to México, and eventually to Texas, which meant that frontier communities had at their disposal an institution that introduced law and order to the northern frontier.

[6] This thesis focuses on the area now known as Texas. Louisiana, although part of Spain's northern province, will not be part of this study due to the fluctuating control of France it its development.

By maintaining a semblance of stability, *ayuntamientos*, or town councils, established the means to effectively populate and successfully govern the frontier communities of present day San Antonio, Goliad, and Nacogdoches, all of which were situated hundreds of miles away from the nearest city or capital capable of resupplying them. *Ayuntamientos* introduced organization, a limited form of democracy and the principle of justice based on rule of law through structures of urban planning and civic law to settlements that eventually became major cities in Texas.

Chapter 4 looks at Tejano contributions to industry, economy, and the defense of Texas.[7] This chapter will describe how these small, yet stable, Tejano communities laid the foundation for fiscal planning, livestock regulatory procedures, water laws, and territorial defense that Texas, in its formation, benefited from and still enjoys today.

Chapter 5, the final chapter, focuses on Tejano persistence in the midst of the formation of the Texas Republic. Specifically, it will focus on the social, economic, and political changes that occurred to the Tejano elite in the years immediately following the Texas war of secession up to annexation with the United States.

This study's intent is to convey the distinctiveness and the contributions of Tejano culture that developed under constant conditions of conflict and change. Tejano communities, faced with a fluid social and political landscape, had to contend with historical forces that directed them on a twisting path of

confrontation and eventual integration with the United States.[8] Once integration was completed, Tejano history and contributions were silenced for over a century.

Nevertheless, the legacy left by Tejanos is too profound to ignore. The ensuing century could not obscure the truth that Tejanos have indeed influenced events significantly and in the process have defined their own path in diverse ways to promote a distinctly "Tejano" way of life. In maintaining their distinct lifestyle, Tejanos have established a culture that expresses their identity that can be traced back to the late 17th century and which continues to resonate to this day.[9]

Beginnings and Overview

The creation of a distinct Tejano culture can only be understood through a rendering of events that led to the formation of the first real Tejano settlement, San Fernando de Béxar. The following chapter reviews the evolution of Texas and Tejano culture from a historical perspective of European colonization in the Americas, focusing on the territories north of the Seno Mexicano.

This account provides the backdrop for the movement of Texas from an undeveloped landmass to an important strategy in Spain's colonial development as a result of the Treaty of Paris in 1763. This treaty reduced European competition for the North American region to two adversaries: England and

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[7] Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, pp. xi-xii.
[8] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, p. xiii.
[9] Ibid., pp. xiii-xiv.

Spain, eliminating France from the New World. This struggle for control of the landmass west of the Mississippi between England and Spain also provides a deeper understanding for the creation of a distinct Tejano culture synthesized from Spanish tradition but grounded in the precarious nature of frontier life. Economically neglected by Spain, settlers from México developed a culture uniquely their own in the Texas province; grounded in self-determination yet loyal to first Spain and then Mexico, Tejanos created a powerful territory with its own economy, political structure and culture, while at the same time fulfilling their mandate as a buffer zone against British and subsequent U.S. invasion.

Early Texas Explorations

From the days of Hernán Cortés to the early 1670s, Spanish efforts in Texas amounted to a series of *entradas* by explorers Cabeza de Vaca, Coronado, Moscoso, and others in the 16th and early 17th centuries. Interest quickly abated after it was discovered that Texas did not possess any gold deposits or other precious metals or gems that could rapidly enlarge the Spanish treasury. Therefore, expansion towards the region occurred gradually. The only activity in South Texas during this time was the result of the implacable attitudes held by several wealthy *Norteños* from settlements in Coahuila and Nuevo Reyno de León who decided to conduct minor reconnoitering expeditions in the Lower Río Grande Valley. Carlos Cantú, one of the first captains who surveyed this region, mentioned that the land was ideal for breeding and managing small and large livestock. Although discussion about the potential to establish *rancherías* in the region occurred, efforts in establishing settlements in Texas did not materialize

until 1686 when Spain discovered the news of La Salle's ill-fated attempt to establish a French colony on the Mississippi River with the intention of breaking Spanish monopoly in the Gulf of México.[10] Fearful of having its northern mines in close proximity to the French, Spain embarked on a series of unsuccessful colonization attempts led by Spanish friars in East Texas that resulted in frustration and the eventual abandonment of the missions by 1693.

Pressed on other fronts, Spain dismissed Texas until they discovered that Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Ibervile, a French naval officer, had successfully establish a colony on the Mississippi River Delta in 1699 which essentially drove a wedge between northern New Spain and Spanish-held Florida.[11] The timing could not have been better for the French as the following year the Spanish Hapsburg King, Charles II, died without an heir to the Spanish thrown. On his deathbed Charles designated Phillipe d'Anjou (Felipe V), the grandson of French Bourbon King, Louis XIV, as his heir. This fusion of Spanish and French interests in Europe saved the fledgling French colony in Louisiana from expulsion.[12]

On a global perspective, the unification of French and Spanish interests under Bourbon control in Europe with the ascension of d'Anjou to the Spanish

[10] Donald Chipman, *Spanish Texas, 1519-1821*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), pp. 71-85; Armando C. Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy: Rancheros and Settlers in South Texas, 1734-1900*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), p. 1; David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 148-152.
[11] Henry Folmer, *Franco-Spanish Rivalry in North America, 1524-1763*, (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1953), pp. 219-225.
[12] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 158.

crown threatened the countries of England, Holland and Austria.[13] The resulting thirteen-year European conflict strengthened commercial ties between French and Spanish settlements in North America, which, after years of mutual distrust, found themselves of secondary interest to their European monarchs.[14] This autonomy from direct control resulted in a period of cooperation between Spanish and French settlements expanding trade along the Gulf coast of Texas and Louisiana.

After the War for Spanish Succession ended in 1713, Spain began to pay closer attention to its peripheral frontier posts in the New World, particularly the region of Texas. Realizing that they had not developed the province to the best of their abilities, Spanish officials were concerned that France might use Louisiana as a base to stage military operations deep into New Spain. Therefore, they passed a series of regulations that prohibited its northern provinces from trading with their French counterparts in Louisiana.

It was at this time that three individuals, while serving their own needs, worked together to promote the permanent settlement of Texas. An important derivative that resulted from their colonization attempts was the gradual development of the unique Tejano culture that came into its own a century later.

Growth of Texas Settlements

In 1713, Father Francisco Hidalgo, a priest who had worked among the Caddo 20 years earlier, realized Spain would not invest in the region based on

[13] Ibid., p. 159; Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 87.
[14] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 159.

purely economic grounds. Thus, he played a strategic game of competition between the two adversaries and penned a letter to the governor of Louisiana, Antoine de la Mothe, Sieur de Cadillac, requesting assistance in reestablishing missions in East Texas.[15] Hidalgo calculated that if Cadillac agreed to help establish the missions, it would provoke a heightened response and bring Spanish presence to the area similar to the one in La Salle's day.[16] Cadillac's motivation on the French side was to establish missions in East Texas in order to trade with the new neighbors. Louis Juchereau de Saint-Denis, the man sent by Cadillac to Texas to find Hidalgo, saw a lucrative position for himself as the go-between or broker of this new deal.[17] It could not have worked any better. The result of this incredible undertaking, was the beginning of permanent settlement in Texas under Spanish patronage. In 1716 the Presidio San Francisco de Los Dolores in East Texas was established as a military fortress. The four churches constructed near the presidio and among the Hasinais, who called this region "Tejas," were designated for mission outreach.[18]

Two years later, the viceroy of New Spain appointed Martín de Alarcón as governor for Texas and ordered him to build a new settlement on the San Antonio River to serve as a midway point between the missions in East Texas and the newly developed Río Grande communities. The eventual result was the

[15] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 110.
[16] Ibid., p. 110.
[17] Folmer, *Franco-Spanish Rivalry in North America, 1524-1763*, p. 232; William J. Grifith, *The Hasinai Indians of East Texas as Seen by Europeans, 1687-1772*, 2 vols. (New Orleans: Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University of Louisiana, 1954), p. 146.
[18] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 162; Carlos E. Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1519-1936*, 7 vols. (1936-1958; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1976), pp. II: 54-61; Grifith, *The Hasinai Indians*, p. 58.

founding of the Villa de San Fernando in 1718. Alarcón also laid the foundations of the Presidio of San Antonio de Béxar and a nearby mission named in honor of the viceroy, San Antonio de Valero with its chapel later renamed as the Alamo.[19]

Spanish presence in Texas increased between 1719 and 1722 when a new war in Europe once again threatened its possessions in the New World. In the War of the Quadruple Alliance Spain fought alone against France, England, Holland, and Austria for control of Italy.[20] To protect Texas against renewed French encroachment, the Spanish Monarch accepted the offer of the Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo, from Coahuila, to reinforce Texas. With over 500 hundred men and thousands of horses and cattle, the Marqués succeeded in firmly establishing Spanish hegemony in the region by constructing three additional presidios, including La Bahía at the site of La Salle's Fort St. Louis, and another in East Texas which became the future site of the capital of Texas—Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Los Adaes.[21] Overall, his expedition secured, as never before, Spain's claim to the province.[22] By the end of his military expedition, Aguayo also had strengthened the military presence in Texas when he reinforced the military guard from 50 to 250 men. His efforts also helped create the nucleus of a small civilian settlement beginning in Béxar.[23]

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[19] Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, pp. 78-94; Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 163.
[20] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. II: 114.
[21] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 123.
[22] Ibid., p. 126.

Economic Strife in Early Texas

Despite these gains for Texas in the early 1720s, the sparse settlements suffered from the Monarch's continued woeful neglect. The communities in East Texas endured the most hardships. Hundreds of miles away from resupply, the families in the community of Los Adaes had to rely on their French neighbors for provisions. Fearful that its citizens might starve, Spanish officials in Texas unofficially loosened trade prohibitions with the French.[24] The contradiction arising between Spain's defensive posturing against interaction with the French and the colony's economic needs created a blasphemous arrangement for the commanding officer at Los Adaes. Forced to feed his troops and their families, José Gonzáles, would uphold the trade embargo by day but would turn a blind eye at night toward a thriving underground trade.[25] Even more alarming than economic hardships was the reality that Spain was steadily losing its grip in East Texas to French control. With few goods to trade with the native population, French and English traders were undermining Spanish influence and consequently its holdings in North America came to a standstill.[26] From Florida to Nuevo México, wherever English or French competition increased, Spain lost control of the Indian trade, which was the key to empire in North America.[27] By giving the Indians a choice to trade, the French and English ended the Indian

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[23] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 168; Castaneda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, pp. II: 142-148.
[24] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 173; Grifith, *The Hasinai Indians*, pp. 139-140.
[25] Grifith, *The Hasinai Indians*, pp. 140-141.
[26] James Lang, *Conquest and Commerce: Spain and England in the Americas*, (New York: Academic Press, 1975), p. 224.
[27] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 174.

dependency for Spanish goods; furthermore, by providing them with weapons and promises of protection, traders gave them the means to maintain their independence.[28]

The economic standstill that affected the communities in Texas was due not so much to a lack of interest in the colonies but rather resulted from poor fiscal planning by the Spanish crown back home. Relying on a steady income of bullion coming primarily from New Spain, Spain's home economy experienced the first tremors of major economic inflation. The consequence of increased prices in the Iberian nation was the inability of its manufacturing infrastructure to compete with goods manufactured in other European countries.[29] Invariably Spain itself became dependent on foreign imports and could not readily provide for its own sustenance while at the same time meet the needs of its American colonies.[30]

For the colonies, the shortage of goods was exacerbated by Spanish restrictive commercial policies that benefited the Iberian nation at the expense of the colonials.[31] A medieval mercantile system was enforced up until the late 18th century that limited the supply of goods throughout the empire.[32] To protect

[28] Ibid., p. 186; Grifith, *The Hasinai Indians*, pp. 143-144.
[29] Ibid., p. 175; J. H. Elliot, "The Discovery of America and the Discovery of Man." In *Spain and Its World, 1500-1700: Selected Essays*, Ed. By J.H. Elliott, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 215.
[30] Ibid, p. 175; Lang, *Conquest and Commerce*, pp. 48-51.
[31] Ibid., p. 175; Lang, *Conquest and Commerce*, pp. 47-48.
[32] Ibid., p. 176.

Spanish interests, manufacturing was prohibited in the New World and trade was limited to Spanish goods, handled by Spanish merchants, carried on Spanish vessels with specific ports designated as official points of embarkation.[33]

By law, goods heading for Texas could only enter through the port of Veracruz, then move inland through México City and Saltillo, eventually arriving at the communities in Béxar or Los Adaes. After adding profit margins for the middlemen handling the merchandise along the way, the cost of these goods was beyond belief. Many Tejanos preferred to trade illegally with the French and English rather than pay exorbitant prices demanded by Spanish officials for the same goods.[34] Due to the unrealistic application of economic policies that only benefited the Iberian Peninsula along with external factors that went beyond the sphere of Spanish control, Spain failed in its ability to meet the needs of the colonists. Tejanos, while still maintaining their loyalty to the Spanish crown began to search for new ways to survive on their own. Knowing that they could not depend exclusively on Spain, they began to look inward toward their own community for support. As a result, regional affiliation became important to Tejanos with this affiliation becoming progressively weaker the further away it extended from their communities.

Another flaw of Spanish policy was to regard its northern provinces strictly as defensive areas whose purpose was to protect the wealthier interior districts of New Spain. Instead of investing money in Texas to create a profitable

[33] Michael C. Meyer, and William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, 4th ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 48.

ranching and agricultural industry for export, it preferred to finance missionary work which did not require large expenditures, maintaining a token garrison force, and imploring the local communities to establish volunteer militia for local defense.

European Perspectives on the Texas Region

In a classic dichotomous perspective, England and France saw the Spanish provinces of Texas and Louisiana, as a glass half full, that is, as opportunities to make a profit. In contrast Spain, on the other hand, saw them as a glass half empty, or as a drain on their finances with little return other than territorial expanse between the emerging nation of the United States and New Spain. Spain continued to manage its New World holdings through political and religious structures. England and France saw the New World as an opportunity to expand their commercial enterprises. Control was still the ulterior motive but the French and British would use trade with Indians and already established settlements to dominate the territory instead of investing in additional infrastructures.[35]

Uninhibited by a powerful mercantile system and an over imposing monarchy that existed in Spain, England's colonies in North American were profit oriented organizations that were not held up by royal regulations or taxes.[36] Realizing that precious minerals were scarce to non-existent in this region,

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[34] Odie B. Faulk, *The Last Years of Spanish Texas, 1778-1821*, (The Hague: Mouton, 1964), pp. 98-99.
[35] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 177.
[36] Lang, *Conquest and Commerce*, p. 227.

French and English traders simply resorted to exporting anything that would help them make a quick profit, including furs, hides, lumber and other resources.

With very little to offer the Indian population, the friars realized the difficulty of persuading the Indians to settle in the missions of Texas. Spanish priests could only watch the Indians become more powerful and obstinate while they themselves could barely fill their own larder.[37] With high import and export costs facing the Texas settlers, Indian assaults becoming more frequent, and the inability to develop a sound economic plan for Texas, Tejanos failed to attract new settlers to the area. Aguayo and others urged the Crown to settle Texas by relocating 400 families to the region or else face the possibility of abandoning the province yet again. In 1723 the Spanish king offered to resettle 200 families from the Canary Islands by subsidizing them for a year and bestowing them with the title of Hijos Dalgo.[38]

However, due to Spanish incompetency, bureaucracy, and peso-pinching measures, only 59 people from the Canary Islands successfully completed the journey to San Antonio in 1731, bringing the region's total population to about 500.[39] These numbers were insufficient to bring about immediate change. In fact, Spain's continuing economic situation gave little incentive for Tejanos to produce beyond their immediate needs. There was no incentive to produce a surplus since it was prohibited to trade with foreign markets located in Louisiana.

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[37] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 187.
[38] Cruz, *Let There be Towns*, pp. 54-72.
[39] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 187; Jesús F. De la Teja, *San Antonio de Béxar: A Community on New Spain's Northern Frontier*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), p. 18.

Tejanos did not have sufficient influence to break the monopoly of the agriculture guilds in the interior provinces of Nueva España, and Spain was unwilling to build a port in Texas, lest it create competition with the one in Veracruz.

Consequently, Texas could not attract large numbers of settlers. The few that chose to remain in the region depended heavily on their community, the presidio structure, and the minimal presence of the military for survival. The military in turn depended on the Crown to sustain them. The Crown's refusal to see Texas as a potential economic resource forced Texas to become a militarized zone that drained the coffers of the Royal treasury.[40]

France Bows Out of the Americas

By 1763, the situation grew steadily worse for Tejanos as the European nations once again reshaped the boundary lines in North America at the conclusion of the French and Indian War. In the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the war on February 10, 1763, France surrendered its possession of its North American Territories to England. The Treaty stipulated that France cede its Louisiana territories. The Louisiana territory east of the Mississippi was transferred to British control and the lands west of the Mississippi reverted to Spain. Spain, in turn, had to surrender its Florida colony to the British.[41] The treaty left Spain, and Texas, in a quandary as it left England as Spain's only European rival in the Americas. The British were in a much better position to exploit the resources in the region to their advantage. Furthermore, Spain

[40] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 195.
[41] J. Leitch Wright Jr., *Anglo-Spanish Rivalry in North America*, (Athens: University if Georgia Press, 1971), pp. 107-110; Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 172.

realized that Louisiana was similar to Texas in one important aspect; it had been a drain on France's finances that became more and more difficult to manage. Despite this apparent money-losing venture, Spain recognized that it was no longer dealing with multiple weaker adversaries but a focused and powerful expansion-minded country in England. Thus, the Spanish had no choice but to accept the terms of the Treaty in order to utilize Louisiana as a buffer province to prevent further English encroachment to New Spain.

For Tejanos, the acquisition of Louisiana by Spain in 1763 meant that whatever meager resources they were receiving from the Spanish to guard its border areas would soon be relegated to Louisiana. Compounding the situation were the increased attacks on Spanish settlements in Texas by Indians wanting to maintain their political independence and protect their lands coveted by Europeans.

Spanish Development of Texas

To get a clearer perspective on the conditions of the Northern Provinces, at this juncture in Spanish colonial control, King Carlos III, one of Spain's ablest monarchs, ordered a two-year inspection of the frontier settlements and presidios from California to Texas. Marqués de Rubí, tasked to perform this mission, quickly discovered how vulnerable the Northern Provinces were to foreign invasion and Indian attack.[42] The conditions of many of the presidios were

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[42] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 173-182; Falk, *Last Years of Spanish Texas*, pp. 15-16; de la Teja, *San Antonio de Béxar*, p. 14; Alfred B. Thomas, trans., and ed., *Teodoro de Croix and the Northern Frontier of New Spain, 1776-1783*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), p. 16.

deplorable. Many were situated so far from one another that they could not realistically support each other. Training was non-existent. Weapons and ammunition were poor and in short supply.[43] There were so few military troops on the frontier that citizens were compelled to join the militia for local defense. Due to the increased reliance on colonists for frontier defense, Spain's military presence, or its lack thereof, had failed to bring peace to the region; furthermore, Apaches, Comanches, and other groups spent years studying the military tactics of the Spanish and, as a result, became more adept in fighting them. Better armed and more mobile with the advent of the horse, the Indians became formidable raiders inflicting heavy losses to the community of Béxar.[44]

Rubí's tour revealed the over-reliance by Spain on Tejano civilians to protect its settlements in Texas. As a result, his inspection produced a new set of regulations for frontier defense. Officially penned as the Regulations of 1772, they became the framework for military strategy that endured throughout Spain's remaining tenure in this region of the New World.[45] Rubí's recommendations emphasized force over diplomacy. However, it was not until the creation of the Commandant General of the Interior Provinces that Tejanos began to gradually recover.

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[43] Elizabeth A. H. John, Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds: The Confrontation of Indians, Spanish, and French in the Southwest, 1540-1795, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1975), pp. 438-439; Falk, Last Years of Spanish Texas, pp. 38-45.
[44] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 214; Falk, *Last Years of Spanish Texas*, pp. 46, 86; John, *The Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds*, pp. 297-303.
[45] Weber, Spanish Frontier, pp. 215-216; John, *The Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds*, pp. 441-443.

The first to head the Comandancia was Teodoro de Croix who first came to New Spain when his uncle accepted the position of viceroy in 1766.[46] In 1776, as Commandant General, de Croix's responsibilities encompassed an administrative unit that included Texas, Coahuila, Nueva Vizcaya, New Mexico, Sinaloa, Sonora, and the two Californias.[47] Needing to inspect the frontier posts personally, de Croix eventually made his way to San Antonio in 1781 to determine the needs of the community.[48] The most pressing problem for Tejanos was defense against the increasing number of raids by Apaches and Comanches along their frontier.

To better effectively combat the Indian menace, de Croix created a series of measures designed to regain control of the region. Despite having limited resources, he expanded on the idea of establishing "flying companies" which with local militia units increased frontier security, an important innovation in Texas history that will be discussed in later chapters.[49] Mounted troops were no longer required to carry unnecessary bulky equipment. Consequently, it gave the soldiers the advantage of moving more rapidly. Another added benefit was that his men required fewer resources and could now fight on foot.[50] He also ordered presidial soldiers to train civilians for the purpose of creating a force multiplier effect, whereby citizen soldiers could in turn, train other community volunteers.

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[46] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 190; Thomas, *Teodoro de Croix*, p. 17.
[47] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 189; John, *The Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds*, p. 487; Thomas, Teodoro de Croix, p. 35.
[48] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 193; John, *The Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds*, pp. 504-505.
[49] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, p. 50.
[50] Max L Moorehead, *The Presidio: Bastion of the Spanish Borderlands*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975), pp. 82-83.

De Croix also listened to the frontier officers who served under him which resulted in modifying the army and, more importantly, Tejano militia units to meet the frontier conditions rather than imposing rigid European modes of warfare onto the frontier.[51]

De Croix's plan to conduct a general offensive against the Apaches for the benefit of the Tejano community was short lived due to Spain's international commitments. Resources to Texas were once again diverted when Spain declared war against England and entered the War of the American Revolution. With resources now going to cover the costs of this war, de Croix was forced to change tactics. Instead of initiating offensive campaigns against the Indians in Texas, he proposed to maintain military pressure on the most dangerous adversary, the Apaches, while resorting to newly created alliances with the remaining Indian nations through diplomacy.[52] Despite these limitations, de Croix's wise and energetic polices helped solidify the Tejano communities in Texas. Settlements in Béxar and the recently established community of Nacogdoches in East Texas now had a better chance to prosper.[53] Ironically, by joining sides with the Americans in their War for Independence, Spain contributed to the removal of British possessions east of the Mississippi River. American victory resulted in bringing aggressive citizens from the newly formed Republic to the borders of Texas and Louisiana. Consequently, Tejanos and

[51] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 226.
[52] Thomas, *Teodoro de Croix*, pp. 45-47; Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 192-193; John, *The Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds*, pp. 504-505.
[53] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 194.

Spain would face the greatest challenge yet to their settlements west of the Mississippi.[54]

American Threat to Texas

Before the signing of the Second Treaty of Paris in 1783, which officially ended America's Revolutionary War and reverted the English possession of Florida to Spain, Juan Gassiot, a French Indian agent, sent a clear warning to Felipe de Neve, the new commander general who replaced de Croix.[55] Gassiot warned Neve of the emerging giant coming from the east that was looking to consolidate more territory. Gassiot characterized the Americans as "active, industrious, and aggressive."[56] Moreover, he saw the United States as an ambitious nation that enjoyed multiple advantages over Spain. First of all, America possessed the advantage of proximity whereas Texas needed the approval of the Viceroy or King before implementing commercial transactions or military expenditures. Secondly, U.S. settlers were steadily advancing toward Spanish-held territory in ever increasing numbers. And lastly, the newly formed U.S. economy showed no signs of stopping where as Spain's mercantilism tradition had brought its economy to a standstill.[57]

By the 1790's, unwise political maneuvering by the Spanish Court brought Spain into a war it could ill afford with the newly formed French Republic. By

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[54] Ibid., p. 194.
[55] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, pp. V: 10-11.
[56] Ibid., p. 11.
[57] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 274; Colin M. MacLachlan, and Jaime O. Rodríguez, *The Forging of the Cosmic Race: A Reinterpretation of Colonial Mexico*, (1980; reprint, Berkley: University of California, 1990), pp. 283-287.

1796, Spain was coerced to ally itself with France prompting England to declare war against Spain and effectively blockaded Spanish ports until 1808.[58]

Meanwhile, de Neve, who was desperately trying to stem American advance into Texas, resorted to gaining allegiance from the trans-Appalachian tribes in Natchez and New Orleans. Warning them that Americans coveted their lands, he urged the Indians to maintain themselves as independent buffers against American expansion.[59] At the same time, de Neve was also preoccupied with stabilizing the situation in Texas. Croix's recommendations to make alliances with Indians, in this case the Comanche nation were proving to be successful. In addition, official Spanish policy now required Tejano settlers to assist the depleted military garrisons by conducting punitive expeditions in the frontier. In 1789, a force primarily composed of civilian militiamen, Comanches, and other Indian allies inflicted a stunning defeat on a huge band of Mescaleros and Lipans at Soledad Creek west of San Antonio. This military success effectively broke the back of Apache resistance in Texas and temporarily brought stability to the region.[60]

Despite the vigorous and energetic policies by de Neve and local officials in Texas and Louisiana to stem the tide of foreign expansion, Spain's rapid decline in Europe made it impossible to contain American advance. By 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte seized control of the French government and began pressuring the Spanish government to surrender Louisiana to France. In a

[58] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 275; Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 212.
[59] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 197.

secret treaty signed on October 1, 1800, Spain surrendered the Louisiana territory on the condition that France would not relinquish the territory to a third party, which Napoleon promptly ignored by selling Louisiana to the United States in 1803.[61]

Spain declared the purchase of the territory by the United States invalid on the grounds that Napoleon lacked title and broke the original terms of the treaty. The United States not only dismissed the allegations but also asserted that its purchase included parts of Texas.[62] Those extravagant claims coupled with the American economic, political, and geographic advantages over Spain that were previously discussed forced Spain to remain on the defensive at the beginning of the 19th century. Spain and France never formalized the borders of Louisiana leaving Spain in a weak position when negotiating with America. Equally important was the Americans' expansionist president, Thomas Jefferson, who seemed to prefer coercion to negotiation.[63]

East of the Mississippi, the Jefferson Administration tried to bully Spain into selling or surrendering part of Florida to the United States. West of the Mississippi, Jefferson claimed that Louisiana stretched beyond Texas and to the Rockies. Spanish officials insisted that the Louisiana territory the U.S. had purchased from France encompassed present-day Louisiana, eastern Arkansas,

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[60] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, pp. V: 13-14.
[61] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 290; Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. V:210; Julia K. Garret, *Green Flag over Texas: The Last Years of Spain in Texas*, (1939; reprint, Austin: Pemberton Press, 1969), pp. 5-10.
[62] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 290.
[63] Ibid., p. 291; Richard W.Gronet, "The United States and the Invasion of Texas," *The Americas* 25 (January, 1969): 281.

and eastern Missouri.[64] Uninhibited by Spanish insistence, Jefferson nonetheless, sponsored several expeditions to the midwest and northwestern territories of present day United States, one of which was the Lewis and Clark expedition.[65]

Texas once again resumed its historic position as a buffer province, with Anglo Americans having replaced the Frenchmen.[66] Spain's approach to the situation was to adopt a three-pronged strategy: hold the territory with its ancient boundaries unimpaired, increase its garrisons and colonize the territory with Spanish subjects, and keep out the Americans.[67] To a remarkable degree Spain did accomplish these goals but the situation for the Tejano community would once again remain tenuous and uncertain beginning in the 19th century. Tejanos once again took a back seat to world politics when events in Europe sent aftershocks reverberating throughout her colonies in the New World.

[64] Ibid., p. 292.
[65] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 223-224.
[66] Weber, *Spanish frontier*, p. 292; Garret, *Green Flag Over Texas*, p. 11.
[67] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 216; Rupert N. Richardson, Ernest Wallace, and Adrian Anderson, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, 5th ed., (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1988), p. 47.

CHAPTER 2

INSURRECTIONS AND FIRST ENCOUNTERS

Spain's Defensive Against the American Threat

Weary of American expansionist moves, Spanish officials correctly surmised that the expeditions conducted by Lewis and Clark to the American northwest in 1804, and the Freeman and Custis expedition along the Red River a few months later, were clear indications of American designs to spread its tentacles of domination across the Spanish frontier. In fact, Spain's minister to the United States perceived Jefferson's real intent as extending America's borders to the Pacific Ocean.[1] Further corroborating evidence for this perception came from the last Spanish Governor of Louisiana who reported that Americans in the vicinity were already calculating the profits they would earn from seizing the mines of northern México.[2] Fear over a U.S. invasion mobilized Spanish efforts in Texas.

The first priority was to strengthen the Spanish position in Texas by constructing a presidio on the Mouth of the Trinity River, named Orcoquisac. A detachment of troops was sent to Presidio Orcoquisac in East Texas to monitor American movements.[3] The military posturing of this detachment was strictly defensive in nature since they had strict orders only to repel American advances.

[1] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 292; Garret, *Green Flag Over Texas*, p. 13.
[2] Ibid., p. 294.

A further measure to assure the troops' defensive stance was an order that the only reinforcements these Spanish troops would receive in case of an emergency would be citizen soldiers.[4]

In a message to Congress on December 3, 1805, similar in tone and deception to the message President Polk would deliver forty years later that would lead to a formal declaration of war against México, President Jefferson insisted that Spaniards had violated American territory and had antagonized American citizens in the Louisiana territory. Jefferson requested authorization to meet aggression with aggression and concluded that force might be used to a certain degree to settle the Louisiana boundary.[5]

Since the boundary of Louisiana had not yet been ratified by Spain and the United States, local disagreements of Spanish and American jurisdiction resulted in minor flare-ups that magnified the situation more than necessary. Spain insisted that their borders, based on historical tradition and delineation, ended at the old presidial fort of Los Adaes. Americans were adamant that Spanish domain terminated on the tributaries of the Sabine River. In 1806, Lt. Colonel Simón de Herrera and General James Wilkinson narrowly avoided massive bloodshed by agreeing on a demilitarized zone; U.S. troops would move east of the Arroyo Hondo if Herrera would move his forces to the west of the Sabine River.[6]

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[3] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. V: 252; Garret, *Green Flag Over Texas*, p. 12.
[4] Nacogdoches Archives, pp. X: 19-20.
[5] Castaneda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. V: 253.
[6] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 224; Falk, *Last Years of Spanish Texas*, pp. 124-126; *Green Flag Over Texas*, pp. 14-15.

Relieved by the avoidance of a military confrontation with the United States, the Crown brought in a series of military strategists to construct a plan for effective leadership against the American threat in Texas. Although Spain determined that an eastern division of the Interior Provinces with a single commander directing the operations in San Antonio would be effective, these plans were delayed when once again Spanish influence in Europe waned two years later. In 1802, the recently appointed Commandant General of the Provincias Internas, Nemesio Salcedo, assumed the leadership of the Texas region. He appointed his nephew, Manuel de Salcedo, as the Spanish governor of Texas in 1808.[7]

Whatever plans the governor and commandant general had in protecting the borders against American encroachment, quickly vanished after 1808 when Napoleon forced the Spanish Monarch, Carols IV, and his son Ferdinand to renounce their rights to the throne in favor of his brother Joseph Bonaparte.[8] Once again Texas would have to rely on its own people and resources as Spanish patriots in the Iberian Peninsula fought to preserve their monarchy and resist French occupation.[9]

European Unrest Creates Rebellion in the Colonies

When news of Ferdinand's abdication reached the New World in the summer of 1808, it threw all of the colonies into disarray. Not knowing who

[7] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 297; Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 230; Félix D. Almaráz, Jr., *Tragic Cavalier: Governor Manuel Salcedo of Texas, 1808-1813*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), p. 24.
[8] Meyer and Sherman, *Course of Mexican History*, p. 279.
[9] Ibid., p. 279.

would rule the Spanish empire, the colonists, from territories in the northern provinces to Tierra del Fuego, took it upon themselves to decide their governing structure until a new monarch emerged in Spain. In New Spain, the *peninsulares*, individuals born in Spain who had monopolized the colony's political, economic, military and religious infrastructure since 1523, wanted the control to remain in their hands--in the name of Ferdinand. The *criollos*, or individuals of Spanish descent born in New Spain contended that the viceroyalty should be governed by juntas--in the name of Ferdinand, but under *Criollo* control.[10] Caught in the middle were the northern peripheral outposts of New Spain. Too distant and too small in population to make their voices heard in the political discourse that was fermenting in Mexico City, they nonetheless, remained attentive to any news bearing information as to which way the political pendulum would swing.

The news did not take long in coming. Amidst the political vacuum that was swirling around México City, Viceroy José de Iturrigaray, a corrupt *peninsular*, attempted an unsuccessful overthrow of the government with *Criollo* support. Even though the attempted coup by Iturrigaray on September 1808 was a minor affair, it nonetheless established a dangerous precedent that was felt as far away as Texas. A royal appointee, never mind how treasonous his actions were, was removed from power by force of arms.[11] The actions that Iturrigaray

[10] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 217; Enrique Krauze, *Mexico, Biography of Power*, trans. Hank Heifetz (1997; reprint, New York: HarperPerennial, 1998), pp. 11-12.
[11] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 218.

initiated in his quest for control prompted other *Criollo* organizations to secretly plan for their next opportunity to overthrow the Spanish government.

Mexico's Revolution

In the autumn of 1810, the San Antonio community woke up to the news of revolution in México. The preliminary reports they received indicated that a priest by the name of Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla was mounting military campaigns in the central districts of New Spain. A curate from Dolores, Father Hidalgo had less idealistic reasons for demanding *Criollos* be granted their rights. Through the Consolidación de Vales Reales of 1804, the Spanish Crown put a lien on his and other wealthy family estates to cover their military blunders in Europe. This led to many wealthy *hacendados*, as well as some curates, going bankrupt in New Spain.[12] As Hidalgo's victories mounted, dissention and rebellion erupted across the northern territories of New Spain.[13]

Much to their surprise, Bexareños were not immune to the unrest developing hundreds of miles away. On the morning of January 22, 1811, the deluge of the Mexican Revolution finally surged into Texas when a retired militia captain, Juan Bautista de las Casas, orchestrated a strike against Spanish royal sympathizers in San Antonio.[14] Capturing Governor Salcedo, Lt. Colonel Simón Herrera, and many other royalist leaders, Las Casas managed to create and hold a rebel outpost in Béxar for almost two months. Unfortunately for Las Casas, he

[12] Krauze, *México, Biography of Power*, pp. 92-93; Lucas Alamán, *Historia de México*, 2nd ed., 5 vols. (Méjico, Editorial Jus., 1968-1969), p. I: 244.
[13] Almaráz, *Tragic Cavalier*, pp. 99-100; Garret, *Green Flag Over Texas*, pp. 33-35.
[14] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. VI: 8; Garret, *Green Flag Over Texas*, p. 41.

did not build a strong base of support in Texas that included Tejanos or in this case Bexareños.[15] Thus, the rebel insurrection in Texas would be short lived.

Tejanos Join the War in the Name of the Crown

Led by two prominent citizens of San Antonio, Subdeacon Juan Manuel Zambrano and José Erasmo Seguín, a surprise attack against Las Casas occurred on March 2, 1811 that removed him from power.[16]

The counterrevolutionaries then sent word to Commandant General Salcedo that the territory in Texas was once again in royalist hands. Soon after releasing Governor Salcedo, the royalists received news of Hidalgo's setbacks in México and his anticipated arrival in Texas. From his defeat in Mexico City and Guadalajara, Hidalgo and his entourage were quickly making their escape to the United States via Texas. Once Governor Salcedo received word of Hidalgo's flight, he, along with 342 men, lay in ambush along the Wells of Baján in Monclova. On March 12, 1811, the heavily re-enforced royalist company captured Hidalgo and his tired rebel insurgents, totaling more than 1,000 men, with relative ease.[17]

Even though the events that transpired in Texas during Hidalgo's revolt were relatively minor in comparison to the bloodshed spilled in the interior districts of Mexico, two significant factors stand out. First, Tejanos, despite a century of loyalty to the Spanish Crown, realized that the needs of the Tejano community would always remain at odds with the strategies for development

[15] Ibid., pp. VI: 17-18.
[16] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 233; Garret, *Green Flag Over Texas*, pp. 53-56.

made in the capital of México. Despite Tejano sacrifices to defend Spanish interests in its northern territories, the interior districts would remain the primary focus for Spain and for the subsequent nascent Republic of México. During the next two and a half decades, Texas and Tejanos would receive minimal attention, as Mexico would primarily respond to insurrections flaring-up in the provinces. Tejano strategies for survival would primarily include those they spent decades refining, mainly distinct methods of ranching, continued contraband trade with Louisiana, and relying on their citizenry to defend the frontier. By the end of the first decade in the 19th century, Tejano communities could only count on themselves to survive on the frontier.

Second and more importantly, the insurrection by Las Casas in Texas proved to Tejanos, revolutionists, royalists, and more importantly the Americans, that the northern territories were becoming even more untenable for Spain than in the past. In the few weeks that Las Casas proclaimed Texas to be independent from Spanish rule, he congratulated himself and his men for having established a government of Americans for Americans and looked to the United States as a natural ally for their cause.[18] More important, the insurgents understood the porosity of the frontier border. Whoever controlled Texas controlled the destiny of the northern frontier as Texas was the open road to Spain's territories in the northern frontier and all supplies and reinforcements

[17] Ibid., p. 233: Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, pp. VI 31-32; Krauze, Mexcio, *Biography of Power*, p. 101; Garret, *Green Flag Over Texas*, pp. 67-68.
[18] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. VI: 14.

would have to pass through this region.[19] To all three groups, the royalists, revolutionists and Americans, Texas would be the key necessary to complete their individual designs for power and control. Tejanos understood this as well and braced themselves for the inevitable conflict that was to pass through their province.

Rebel Forces Align with the U.S. against Texas

The wait was not long in coming. Barely a year later, the province of Texas was swept up by the violent gale storm of rebellion, this time emanating from the south but aided by the east. The Republican Army of the North, led by José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara, a political leader who successfully fomented rebellion in Coahuila and Nuevo Leon and who managed to escape royalist forces by crossing into Texas, made his way to the United States.[20]

About the same time that Governor Salcedo resumed the governorship of Texas, Gutiérrez, without portfolio, was in Washington soliciting aid for his cause.[21] In Washington, Gutiérrez met prominent U.S. officials who wanted to give him full support and military aid for the revolutionists in México.[22] According to Luis de Onís, Spanish diplomat to the United States, then Secretary of State for the U.S., James Monroe, not only promised arms and ammunition, but also agreed to send more than 27,000 men. The terms of the American government

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[19] Ibid., p. VI: 14.
[20] Harris G. Warren, *The Sword Was Their Passport: A History of Filibustering in the Mexican Revolution*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1943), pp. 5-8; Gronet, "The United States and the Invasion of Texas," 292.
[21] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. VI: 2.
[22] Ibid., p. VI: 57; Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 299; Warren, *The Sword was their Passport*, p. 7; Gronet, "The United States and the Invasion of Texas," 287-288.

for lending military aid was the annexation of the Texas province to the United States to which Gutierrez tactfully declined.[23]

With the offer off the table, Monroe still provided letters of introduction for Gutiérrez to take to Louisiana to raise an army. By August 8, 1812, the Republican Army of the North crossed the Sabine River and marched into Texas.[24] Publicly, the United States protested the invasion in order to minimize tensions with the Spanish government, but privately, it looked forward to receiving news from William Shaler, special agent for the Americans in the Gutiérrez expedition. In a private letter to Monroe, Shaler expressed high hopes that the resulting expedition would open Mexico to the United States and to the talents and enterprise of its citizens.[25]

By the spring of 1813, the Republican Army succeeded in capturing the presidio of Goliad and defeated the Army of Governor Salcedo and Lt. Colonel Herrera at Salado Creek.[26] Shortly after the battle, Salcedo and Herrera were found guilty of treason against the Hidalgo movement and were executed by having their throats cut. Their mutilated bodies remained where they fell.[27]

For the Bexareños, the occupation by the Republican Army forced them to take sides in the cause. Most wanted to remain neutral; however, there were some who had become so disaffected with the Crown, that they decided to test

[23] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. VI: 64.
[24] Gronet, "The United States and the invasion of Texas, " 281-284.
[25] Ibid., p. 284.
[26] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 299; Almaráz, *Tragic Cavalier*, pp. 168-169; Warren, *The Sword was their Passport*, pp. 48-49.
[27] Almaráz, *Tragic Cavalier*, p. 171.

their fortune with the rebel army. Those who remained loyal to the Crown had their property and cattle confiscated by the rebel army.[28]

Despite his early military success, conspirators in his army eventually removed Gutiérrez from his command after he made a proclamation that Texas would remain a part of the Republic of Mexico if his revolution proved to be successful.[29] Apparently, Shaler, once realizing Gutiérrez did not intend to give up Texas to the United States, manipulated the situation to remove Gutiérrez from power and replaced him with another leader willing to make the annexation possible.[30] After sending Gutiérrez into exile, the Republican Army of the North then elected José Alvares de Toledo as their new commander. Toledo, a former Spanish naval officer, had as his immediate responsibility the task of stopping the royalist forces in Mexico under the leadership of General José Joaquín Arredondo.

General Arredondo, after receiving a dispatch from President Bustamente to resist the advance of the Republican Army of the North, wasted no time in fulfilling his orders.[31] On August 18, 1813, Arredondo's well-seasoned veterans met the insurgent army on the banks of the Medina River. For more than three hours, the insurgent army barely kept a semblance of order before succumbing to the advances of royalist forces. Arredondo determined to avenge the death of Salcedo and Lt. Colonel Herrera, ordered Lt. Colonel Isidro Elizondo to run down

[28] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. VI: 121.
[29] Ibid., p. VI: 103; Warren, *The Sword was their Passport*, pp. 62-65.
[30] Ibid., VI: 109; Gronet, "The United States and the invasion of Texas, " 300-301.
[31] Ibid., VI: 105; Warren, *The Sword was their Passport*, pp. 66-68.

the enemy fleeing to East Texas.[32] Approximately 1,000 rebels fell at the Battle of Medina River, and prisoners found fleeing were shot as traitors. The carnage continued the following day, all the way to Nacogdoches, as Elizondo continued pursuit with a select group of 500 men.[33]

After the battle, Arredondo generously praised his officers and men, several of whom were Bexareños. One of those soldiers who participated in the skirmish was an aspiring lieutenant who would one day make his return to Texas as President of the Republic of México, Antonio López de Santa Anna.[34]

The forces led by General Arredondo succeeded in recapturing the province for Spain in 1813. In a bloody purge, Arredondo executed rebel soldiers and Tejano citizens who had conspired against the Spanish Crown. From San Antonio to the Sabine, the entire region was laid to waste. For years to come Texas' recovery would be slow and arduous. Both mentally and physically, the fear of vulnerability was realized when the Tejano population, which numbered over 4,000 in 1803, fell to fewer than 2,000 by 1820. The last Spanish Governor of Texas, Antonio de Martínez, sent repeated pleas for help but his appeals went unanswered. In its last years as a Spanish colony, Texas lay in ruins.[35]

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[32] Ibid., pp. VI: 115-116; Warren, *The Sword was their Passport*, pp. 68-71.
[33] Ibid., p. VI: 117.
[34] Ibid., p. VI: 116.
[35] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 299; Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. VI: 120; Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 53.

U.S. Negotiations for Spanish Territories

While Spanish insurgents and American filibusters were invading the northern provinces of New Spain, officials of the Madison administration were attempting to take advantage of Spain's tenuous holdings in Florida. After invading western Florida, the American administration coerced the Spanish government to cede the territory to them in exchange for the opportunity to negotiate its remaining territories.[36] The result of this exchange was the agreement by both countries concerning the territories of Florida and Texas. On February 22, 1819, John Quincy Adams, representing the U.S. and Luis de Onís, representing Spain, signed a treaty that ceded Spanish held territory in Florida over to the United States. The United States, in turn, relinquished its claim to Texas and further agreed on a permanent boundary beginning on the Sabine River, which still separates present day Texas from Louisiana.[37]

To many Americans, the terms of the Adams-Onís treaty represented the surrender of Texas to Spain. The aftermath of this agreement would continue to haunt the Mexican Republic in its future discourse with the United States. In the meantime, subsequent uprisings in East Texas erupted once the news of the Treaty became public.

The most prominent insurrection worth mentioning, led by James Long, a merchant from Natchez, is important for five distinct reasons.[38] First, the demise

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[36] Philip C. Brooks, *Diplomacy and the Borderland; The Adams-Oníz Treaty of 1819*, (Berkely Calif.: University of California Press, 1939), pp. 139-150.
[37] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 299; Brooks, *Diplomacy and the Borderland*, pp. 163-164.
[38] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 51; Warren, *The Sword was their Passport*, pp. 233-237.

of Long's insurrection coincided with the demise of the Spanish empire in New Spain and ushered in the beginning of the Mexican Republic. Second, Long's four-month stay in Texas to establish an independent region, once again magnified the centuries of failure by Spain and the pressing concerns México would have to secure the borders of its northern territories. Third, Long's insurrection underscored the vulnerability of Tejano communities in the region and their inability to recover after Arredondo's purge in 1813. Fourth, the publicity of Long's expedition in Texas brought attention to restless and land-hungry frontiersmen from the United States with desires of settling in the West.[39] Realizing the opportunities Texas could provide, Long's rebellion prepared the way for the subsequent settling, occupation, and conquest of Texas by land-hungry Anglo Americans.

Lastly, the Tejanos themselves realized that conditions in Texas could only improve through intense population efforts. At this point, it did not matter who came just as long as it occurred immediately. Tejanos, still feeling they were in control of their own destiny in Texas, believed they could control any incoming settlers to their region. Trading with the English, and eventually Americans, in East Texas gave Tejanos insight into the European/American worldview. If Anglos were permitted to enter Texas, they believed that, with a little luck, they could not only co-exist but they could come out ahead in the end.

[39] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. VI: 162.

Tejanos Open Texas to U.S. Settlers

Permitting Anglo Americans to settle in Texas, to Tejanos, was considered a necessary evil and worth the risk because they believed the economic results outweighed the challenges. Tejanos stood to gain from the perseverance and desperation of the *Norteamericanos* in turning the vast territory of Texas into a productive state. Tejanos also considered the strategic advantage of their territory, wedged between the United States and México, as the perfect opportunity to utilize their skills of cultural mediation. As middlemen between two cultures and more importantly, in their role as economic facilitators between both countries, the potential to secure their positions as elite Mexicanos was too tempting to ignore.

Unbeknownst to the Tejano community, many of the Anglos tearing into Texas had only one goal in mind—the consolidation of the Texas frontier for the benefit and pursuit of American interests. The harbinger of what was to come manifested itself when Mexico's first minister to Washington, Manuel Zozaya, reported to his superiors that the arrogance of the Americans did not allow them to view Mexicanos as equal with their new Mexican neighbors. In reality, U.S. arrogance extended beyond Zozaya's belief that Mexicanos were unequal, Americans viewed all of the Americas as their domain and Mexicans were just another brown menace to eliminate or remove.[40]

When the first Anglo colonists crossed the Sabine in the early 1820's, most had never encountered a Tejano. Yet, according to De León, their first

reaction after making contact with Tejanos in Texas was contemptuous. Many whites believed that all Mexicanos were abhorrent. De León attributes these feelings as emanating from the days of Queen Elizabeth who created a culture and psyche that found it desirable to control all that was beastly--from sexuality, to nature, to colored peoples. As whites progressively moved westward in the United States, they felt compelled to subdue the external world including the native people.[41] In attempting to control their own environment, Anglos were able to confront their own inner demons, namely, not falling into the temptation of adopting cultural practices and traditions that were distinctly different than their own.

The history of Mexican-American coexistence in Texas is a history of cultural confrontation. On each side you had a race of people who responded or tried to respond in ways based on their interpretations of the actions of the other, and more importantly, on assumptions each group had about the other. Their experiences over the course of the 19th century modified each group's behavior to accommodate relations between them but their ideological differences remained and tensions grew. In fact, these tensions continued to mount throughout the 19th century and continue to exist today.[42]

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[40] David J. Weber, *The Mexican Frontier, 1821-1846: The American Southwest Under Mexico*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, c1982), p. 12.
[41] Arnoldo de León, *They Call Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900*, (1983; reprint, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), p. 1.

Tejano and U.S. Culture Differences

Tejano culture differed from Anglo culture in three distinct ways. First, both held different views about regional and national affiliation and the level of loyalty affixed to each one. By the 1820's, Anglos had developed a strong sense of nationalism. Defeating the British monarchy, declaring their right to an independent republican form of government and ratification of the Constitution assisted in developing these sentiments. Furthermore, the belief in expansion and in carrying with them the vestiges of eastern U.S. society provided the means for self and nationalistic identification.[43]

Tejanos on the other hand, did not have strong nationalistic allegiances, having fended for themselves for centuries while at the same time buffering New Spain from U.S. invasion. Tejanos used the politically unstable time between Spanish and Mexican governance to successfully lobby for inclusion of American colonists to Texas. In addition, due to their geographic separation from the interior government, they remained at odds with new Mexican governmental policies that dealt in matters of commerce, finance, and defense. Therefore, in the absence of nationalist feelings, Tejanos formed unions among themselves through familiar and commonplace traditions and custom such as place of origin, language, religion, and eventually, regional identity in Texas. Regional affiliation

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[42] Robert J. Rosenbaum, *Mexicano Resistance in the Southwest: "the sacred right of self-preservation."*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, c1981), p. 7.
[43] Ibid., p. 9.

and loyalty became a primary concern for Tejanos as identities and allegiances were drawn more to the municipality than the state.[44]

The second difference between Anglos and Tejanos was in the way they perceived the value of land and the financial dividends that could be derived from this commodity. Tejanos for instance, functioned in a world where the pastoral economy was intimately tied to identity and formed a normal way of life between the individual, the community, and the land. Tejanos engaged in what is commonly termed subsistence agriculture where surplus was minimal but production was more than sufficient for the family. For the Tejano, agricultural production maintained access to land, held in communal land grants intended to sustain the integrity of the community, and provided food for the family and aid for neighbors when necessary. Furthermore, overarching state mandates that favored the agricultural guilds of the interior provinces, dissuaded Tejanos to produce a surplus that could not be sold easily or for a fair price. Land to Tejanos, therefore, was not only a basic resource at their disposal but was part of the environment that sustained them and gave them a sense of purpose.[45]

To Anglos, land was nothing more than a commodity that could be purchased and sold at any time and by anyone. Land and the resources it could provide for sale was what interested Americans. Whether land was used for raising crops, livestock, extracting minerals, or whatever income Anglos could

[44] Ibid., pp. 10-11.
[45] Ibid., p. 11.

derive from it. The emergence of these philosophies on the Texas frontier created an inevitable struggle between a capitalist and pastoral mindset.[46]

These philosophical differences accentuated the third and final dissimilarity between both groups—namely, their ethnic and social distinction. After initial interactions, Anglos and Tejanos alike realized how dissimilar they were from each other. To Americans, while Tejanos used a European language, practiced a Christian religion, used political and legal systems and engaged in economic enterprises, which separated them from the Indians, these practices were very different from their own. The language was Spanish not English, the religion was Catholic not Protestant, the political system was hierarchical not democratic, and their economic system was mercantile and not capitalistic.[47] Geertz argues that primordial relationships like race, custom, religion or language form the basis for ethnic identification. Ethnic identification in turn determines whether a person from a different group is a friend or an enemy. Since these distinctions quickly ascertain the intentions of a person or group that is different from one's own, then distinctions or differences among cultural groups can imply hostility.[48] The marked differences by both cultures would remain a continuous source of tension and, in the subsequent years, the competition for the singularly important commodity that existed in Texas at that time, land, produced the inevitable antagonistic struggle that often led to violence. But, these feelings of animosity were years away from fruition. The significant sentiments that were

[46] Ibid., p. 12.
[47] Ibid., p. 6; Clarence H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 316-317.

developing during this period were the anticipatory feelings of eagerness by Americans who could not wait to resettle in Texas and the hopeful expectations of stability and prosperity of the Tejanos.

First U.S. Town in Texas

To the relief of Tejanos who were looking to populate their frontier lands, Spanish policy during their fading years of empire in New Spain began to encourage Anglo American immigration on a large scale. In September 1820, the Spanish Cortes or ruling council authorized all Spanish dominions to open its borders to foreigners willing to respect the laws and constitution of Spain. For Tejanos, this was an opportunity to increase their sparse population and effectively settle and control their vulnerable frontier area.[49]

One of the first settlers to take advantage of the offer was Moses Austin who petitioned the governor of Texas, Antonio de Martínez, to settle 300 families in Texas on December 23, 1820. The role Austin sought was that of an *empresario* whose responsibility was to fulfill the terms of a contract between the *empresario* and the state. The terms agreed upon included the number of settlers the *empresario* was required to recruit, the location and the establishment of a settlement according to the laws and traditions of the government and the division of land to the settlers within the terms and boundaries specified in the contract. The terms of the contract were very

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[48] Ibid., p. 13.
[49] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 296; Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 53; Jesús F. de la Teja, and John Wheat, "Bexar: Profile of a Tejano Community, 1820-1832," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 89 (July, 1985): 31.

generous. Colonists could purchase a *sitio* (4336 acres) for as little as $87.50 payable in three annual installments beginning on the fourth year. Furthermore, colonists would be exempt from taxation for ten years. With the help of Baron de Bastrop, an influential citizen of San Antonio, Governor Martínez endorsed Austin's request on January 17, 1821.[50] Unfortunately, Moses died soon after he received the contract and it was up to his son Stephen to complete the task.

An important Tejano who would work closely with Stephen F. Austin was a leading citizen of Béxar, Don Erasmo Seguín. Between 1821 and 1836, Seguín witnessed the steady immigration of Anglo colonists into Texas and along with many other Tejano elites, successfully persuaded state authorities to allow Anglos to continue to settle in the region. Not only would the Anglo settlers aid Tejanos in populating the region, it was anticipated that they would help regain economic advantage in Texas.[51]

Raúl Ramos points out that Tejanos, as members of the Mexican interior government, who were involved in the colonization efforts, influenced the development of an ethnic identity unique to Texas.[52] This ethnic identity was constructed against both the Anglo culture and the emerging Mexican identity. In turn, as Anglo numbers increased in the region, their desire to be separate from

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[50] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, pp. 53-54, 63; Andrés A. Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas: The Native Mexicans of Texas, 1820-1850" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1977), pp. 243-244.
[51] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," pp. 105-106; De La Teja "Bexar: Profile of a Tejano Community, 1820-1832", 13-15; Jesús F. de la Teja, *A Revolution Remembered: The Memoirs and Selected Correspondence of Juan N. Seguín*, (Austin Tex.: State House Press, 1991), pp. 6-7; Eugene C. Barker, *The Life of Stephen F. Austin: Founder of Texas 1793-1836*, (1925; reprint, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), p. 30.
[52] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 181.

Tejanos became more apparent and eventually emerged as a discourse of separation between the two groups.

From the first signs of American expansion to Texas after the Revolutionary War, the Tejano elite realized that the introduction of Americans to Texas was a risk to national security. México still had as its priority the need to secure the borders of Texas from illegal American encroachment and was extremely hesitant to grant rights of access and accommodation to Anglo settlers in Texas. Many Americans, after all, considered Texas to be part of the United States and were not predisposed to listen to the terms of the Adams-Onís Treaty. As a result, Anglo claims to Texas had a significant effect on the reactions they had towards Tejanos once they crossed into Mexican territory. Mexicanos, constantly faced with the need for Anglo settlers but weary of their motivations, required that Anglo Americans prove their Christianity and moral character before being allowed into México. These concerns were eventually diminished through the efforts of Bexareños who sponsored the *Norteamericanos* by giving them letters of support.[53]

The majority of the Tejanos who were in favor of allowing Anglo Americans to settle in Texas belonged to the elite society in Béxar. The community structure in Béxar reflected the class divisions that were prevalent in Spanish society throughout its Latin American empire namely, the elite and the common classes. These two societies moved in separate spheres with most social interactions limited to within each group. Elite Tejanos developed their

own version of Tejano culture by basing their elite status on the values of honor and lineage. These beliefs with the addition of their social hierarchy enabled them to ascend to the political offices of the town and region. Bexareño families who considered themselves to belong to the privileged class included the Seguín's Navarro's, Ruis's, Padilla's, and Musquiz's. Among the Bexareño elite who were active in promoting the idea of allowing Americans to settle in Texas was Erasmo Seguín. [54]

Seguín, who befriended Stephen F. Austin, encouraged him and his brother, James, to stay at his home. James learned Spanish, whereas the elder Austin learned the political and cultural nuances of México. Baron de Bastrop was instrumental in securing the state colonization law that insured Anglo American colonists received special advantages. Some of these advantages included regulations that required Americans to be professing "Christians" and not "Catholics" as Tejanos originally requested. Bastrop also helped the American cause by assuring that the article of slavery would be vague enough to allow the importation of slaves.[55] José Antonio Navarro was also active in the Anglo cause by providing favorable legislation to promote Anglo colonization on the state level and by negotiating a loophole to allow Anglo immigrants to bring slaves to Texas, as indentured servants, after a law was passed in 1829 that ended slavery in México. Other Tejanos were successful in obtaining tax-exempt

[53] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 111.

[54] De la Teja, *A Revolution Remembered*, p. 7; Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," pp. 111-114.
[55] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 243.

status for cotton growing, livestock raising, and for establishing a tobacco administrative district in Texas.[56]

Between 1821 and 1824, México went through a considerable period of transformation. By September 1821, the Spanish reign in México ended after 300 years of Hapsburg and Bourbon rule and was replaced 10 months later with Mexico's first attempt at a monarchy on July 22, 1822. Ten months later, Mexico's first and only emperor, Agustin de Iturbide I, abdicated after failing to bring México out of its financial depression. México then spent the next few months deciding on a government that would lead it out of its economic doldrums. By 1824, the delegates decided on a constitution that resembled, in part, that of its northern neighbor. Under the Constitution of 1824, the Estados Unidos Mexicanos were organized as a federal republic comprised of 19 states and 4 territories.[57] Texas, after unsuccessfully lobbying for separate statehood, became a territory attached to the state of Coahuila.

During this three-year period, it appeared to many Tejano elite that conditions were beginning to improve in Texas but within a few short years the issue of ethnic discord would rear its ugly head and would abate only when the Anglos wrested Texas away from México.

Texas-Anglo Strife

The incident that triggered the "snowball" effect was the rebellion in the Haden Edwards Colony otherwise known as the Fredonian Rebellion. An early

[56] Ibid., p. 246-247.
[57] Meyer and Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, pp. 296-314.

empresario, Haden Edwards, received a land grant authorizing him to settle families in East Texas. Within the boundaries of this grant were settlers who illegally settled in the area over numerous generations. Austin warned Edwards to handle the matter locally and to reduce any possibility of inflaming the situation by antagonizing the settlers. Austin's advice went unheeded. When Edwards made the decision to arbitrarily charge every one for the right to settle in his land grant, it created discord in the region. Needless to say, Mexican officials had to step in and control the situation before it escalated. In the process, the president of México revoked Edwards' grant and ordered him to leave the country in June, 1826. However, México took four months before acting on the president's demands. This gave Edwards the opportunity to establish an "Independent Republic" in Nacogdoches he called Fredonia. By January 1827, militia units from San Antonio and Austin's colony converged on Nacogdoches to forcefully remove Edwards from Texas only to discover news of his escape to Louisiana a few days before.[58] Even though this was a minor rebellious act, lasting less than a month in duration, and the fact that individuals sent to expel Edwards were both Tejano and Anglo, the Fredonian uprising left a very serious impression in the minds of many Mexicans. Mexicans concluded that the Fredonian insurrection was just another of many previous attempts by the United States to take Texas away from México. One of the results of this uprising was the passage of legislation designed to curb Anglo influence in the region.

[58] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 65-66; Samuel H. Lowrie, *Culture Conflict in Texas, 1821-1835*, (1931; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1967), pp. 108-111.

In 1828, the President of México, Guadalupe Victoria, sent his most trusted and scholarly of generals, Manuel Mier y Terán to travel to Texas, report on the situation and propose a plan of action to keep Texas in the Mexican nation.[59] By June of that year the first of many reports began filtering back to the Mexican capital. These reports were blunt and alarming. Mier y Terán observed very little interaction between Tejano settlements and the Anglo community. There were few Tejanos in Anglo settlements on the eastern portion of the State and those that resided there were of the lowest class.[60] As an outsider to the region, Mier y Terán also noticed the cultural ignorance of each other's cultures and the magnitude of the racial drift between Anglos and Tejanos. He correctly understood how that ignorance could result in future antagonisms between the two communities. Furthermore, he reported on the constant stream of Anglo immigrants who were of poor or criminal backgrounds and the growing controversy over slavery in Texas.[61] Future correspondence would reveal Mier y Terán's suspicions of sinister motives behind the influx of Anglo immigrants, namely the acquisition of Texas by the United States.[62] He depicted many of the Americans as progressive individuals but at the same time, they could be shrewd, unruly, and very demanding.[63]

Along these lines of perceived threat by the *Norteamericanos*, Mier y Terán's suggestions for the Texas frontier centered on building military posts at

[59] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 66.
[60] Ibid., p. 66.
[61] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 129.
[62] Ibid., p. 129.
[63] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 66.

strategic locations—that is to say, on or near American settlements and sending additional troops to the region. If Mexico was to keep Texas, Mier y Terán argued, the government had to do more to encourage Mexicans to migrate to Texas, or if need be, to solicit Europeans. México also had to encourage trade between Texas and the rest of the Mexican Republic. According to Mier y Terán, these strategies needed to be enacted now or Texas would be lost forever.[64] The recommendations by Mier y Terán underscored the seriousness of his perceptions of the Texas situation--especially when considering the fact that since 1821, the American delegation in México headed by U.S. minister Joel Poinsett, had for years tried to convince México to sell Texas to the United States even though México had never put Texas up for sale.[65]

Not only did México react swiftly to Mier y Terán's recommendations, but México's new president, Vicente Guerrero, issued a proclamation that emancipated all slaves from the Mexican territory on September 15, 1829.[66] Upon receiving news of the decree, Tejanos not only refused to publish it, they sent an appeal to exempt Texas.[67] Austin protested vociferously to Mier y Terán conveying to him that the law seemed to reward the loyalty and services Anglos had given to México with their destruction. Ramos is quick to mention that those

[64] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 66; Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 131.
[65] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 81; Meyer and Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, pp. 299,304; Krauze, *Mexico a Biography of Power*, p. 130.
[66] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 132; Lowrie, *Culture Conflict*, p. 115.
[67] Ibid., p. 133.

remarks illustrated Austin's predisposition of disdain for the Mexican government and Mexican race.[68]

Within months, the Bexareños sent dispatches to allies in the state capital of Coahuila and expressed their concerns. A state legislative representative who took up the Tejano cause had direct access to the President Guerrero. After a series of correspondence and personal meetings with President Guerrero, an agreement was reached that exempted Texas from this law.[69] Once again Tejanos had done what they could to protect Anglo interests in the region.

Believing that a major crisis had been averted, citizens of Texas were startled to discover that another decree had been passed in Mexico City that completely eliminated Anglo American colonization. During the political instability that existed in the Mexican capital during this time, a coup d'etat effectively removed Guerrero and his liberal faction from power in favor of a more conservative and militaristic party with Anastacio Bustamante as President.[70]

Bustamante, a former Comandante de las Provincias Internas, was familiar with the situation in Texas. He, along with his conservative minister of foreign relations, Lucas Alamán, were so afraid of losing Texas that they passed the Law of April 6, 1830 that prohibited Americans to settle in Mexico. It also ended Anglo American immigration not already under way through a previous grant, and prevented further introduction of slaves. Furthermore, the law

[68] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 135; Ramos also writes that Austin's correspondence to a friend in 1822-23 mentions that during a visit to Mexico City he concluded that "the majority people of the whole nation as far as I have seen them want nothing but tails to be more brutes than apes." From Samuel H. Lowrie, *Culture Conflict in Texas, 1821-1835*, p. 89.
[69] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," pp. 268-269.

authorized the establishment of military posts in Texas and settlements around these posts by Mexican colonists.[71]

To the Mexican government, the law was seen as a reasonable act to meet an emergency; to the Americans the law was interpreted as an indictment of their presence.[72] Tejanos once again went to the aid of their *vecinos*, complaining that Texas lacked the manpower to patrol the border and that the law would only bring in people of ill repute. The Tejano elite, particularly the alcalde of San Antonio, Ramón Músquiz, rallied to support the Anglo cause. They expressed their support in terms of increasing the population, expanding commerce and even describing the benefits all could enjoy from the American civic system.[73]

The Law of April 6, 1830, attempted to bring Texas back into the Mexican fold. The law managed to bring changes but not in the way Mexican officials envisioned. The new law denied Americans access to Texas while at the same it time encouraged Mexicanos and Europeans to settle in the region. Military presence in Texas increased, as did American dissatisfaction with the Mexican government. Even though the Law of April 6 slowed immigration, it did not effectively stop it. Anglo Americans just assumed the risks of illegal immigration and invaded Texas in pursuit of economic and personal gains. In other instances,

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[70] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 67.
[71] Josefina Z. Vázquez, y Lorenzo Meyer, *México frente a Estados Unidos: un ensayo histórico, 1776-1993*, (México: Colegio de México, 1982), pp. 43-44; David J Weber, *La Frontera norte de México, 1821-1846: El Sudoeste norteamericano en su época mexicana*, trans. Agustín Bárcena (1982; reprint, México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988), p. 248.
[72] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 68; Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 135.
[73] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 136.

efforts were made to evade its restrictions, which left Tejanos in an unusual and often difficult position to mediate between the interests of both groups.[74]

These uncertain times were further exacerbated when the colonists' tax exemptions expired at the same time that the April 6th Law went into effect. State and national authorities historically depended on these collections and they were planning to enforce their collection.[75] That is when the true colors of the Anglo Americans were manifested. Although pledging to profess Mexican citizenship and agreeing to become loyal subjects of the Mexican federation in return for the acquisition of very cheap land with minimal administrative interference, Anglos never intended to live up to their bargain. They used the argument of not being comfortable with military authority over civilians to collect revenue, conveniently forgetting the terms and conditions of the contract they signed years before.

In December 1831, shots were exchanged between Mexican troops and Anglo shippers on the Brazos River. The Mexican army established a tax collection point on the mouth of the Brazos to collect shipping taxes that Anglo shippers were trying to avoid.[76] The military confrontation reinforced Anglo fears of military intervention and Tejanos agreed to place a deputy collector in Brazoria and eliminate the presence of the military.

A few months later in the spring of 1832, Colonel Juan David Bradburn, a native Virginian serving in the Mexican army, gave asylum to two runaway slaves from Louisiana. When Anglo settlers received word of this incident, they

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[74] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 67; Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 137.
[75] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 81.

demanded the slaves be released, forgetting how precarious their rights to slavery were on Mexican territory. Anglo bounty hunter William Barret Travis was appointed by the slave's owner to recapture and return the slaves. When Bradburn refused to release the slaves, Travis made veiled threats of bringing an armed force from Louisiana to recover the slaves. Bradburn had Travis arrested in June 1831, on sedition charges that occurred on military property and demanded that he forthwith be tried by a military court.[77]

This prompted an angry response by the Anglo community who sent 160 men to besiege Bradburn and his men. Further trouble was averted only when Colonel José de las Piedras, commander of the Nacogdoches garrison, rushed to the scene and agreed to release Travis and others taken into custody for sedition to civil authorities for trial. He was not sympathetic to the colonist cause but Colonel de las Piedras needed to contain the situation.[78]

Despite giving the Anglos the opportunity to redress their grievances, the Anglos struck again at the port of Anáhuac soon after de las Piedras left, killing five Mexican soldiers and forcing the garrison to withdraw to Matamoros. In August 1832, barely two months after the Bradburn incident, an Anglo Texan mob, determined to drive every Mexican soldier from the province, successfully completed their strategy by forcing Colonel de las Piedras, to make his retreat to México.[79]

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[76] Ibid., p. 82.
[77] Ibid., p. 83.
[78] Ibid., p. 84; James E. Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes Toward the Mexican, 1821-1845" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1976), pp. 73-74.
[79] Ibid., p. 84.

Tejano Struggles for Independence and the Formation of Texas

Fearing retributions and more importantly taking advantage of the situation developing in México, Austin attempted to make amends by including Tejanos in the Anglo American plan to create a separate state. By 1832, Bustamente had lost control of the presidency and was replaced a year later by Santa Anna, leaving México unable to spare any military troops to quell the Texas insurrection. During this state of flux, the state legislature in Saltillo was preoccupied with an internal power struggle of its own when Anglo colonists, attempting to take advantage of the power vacuum, asked the Alcalde of Béxar, Ramón Músquiz, to join the Anglo colonists in drafting a petition to separate Coahuila and Texas.

Appalled at the secessionist tendency of the Anglo colonists, the Tejanos did not send any delegates to their organized convention in San Felipe on October 1, 1832, to the delight of many of the Anglos.[80] Afterwards, Músquiz reprimanded Austin for allowing the illegal convention to take place. Nevertheless, Tejanos now understood, as never before, that they were negotiating a middle road between two political extremes. They could not choose a stance that would alienate the Anglo Americans nor the Mexican state.[81]

In December, 1832, the Béxar ayuntamiento met to discuss the situation in Texas. Unlike the Anglo resolutions, the committee did not ask for a separate statehood. Instead, their referendum rested on issues ranging from colonization

[80] Austin recalled two years later that his efforts to cooperate with the local Mexicans…brought him unpopularity with some of his neighbors. From Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes," p. 76.
[81] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 141.

to judicial reforms. They were also critical of the April 6th Law and argued that while it would keep the hardworking and industrious individuals in Texas, it would not stop the dregs of Anglo society from getting in. They also hinted that Anglo towns, which had broader access to trade opportunities with both the U.S. and México, were already becoming self sufficient, whereas the Mexican settlements were still dependent on the soldiers and militia's wages for survival.[82]

When the Béxar *ayuntamiento* made their declaration known to the Anglo community, Anglos were disappointed that the Bexareños did not push for separate statehood. While promising the Bexareños that the Anglos would not convene unless it was with the joint efforts of the Tejano community, Austin nonetheless called for a second convention to take place once again at San Felipe on April 1, 1833.[83] It was not long before the Bexareños discovered the news of the second convention and reminded Austin yet again of the illegitimacy of his political process. Furthermore, it added to the growing distrust between Tejanos and the Anglos.[84]

Austin, nevertheless, made repeated attempts at persuading Tejanos to support the idea of statehood, but even Austin's closest ally, Erasmo Seguín, wavered. Yet Austin persisted by whispering rumors and threats of Anglo American revolts without statehood.[85] Unable to convince the Tejanos, Austin accepted the nomination to take the Anglo petitions to Mexico City that requested

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[82] Celia Gutierrez Ibarra, *Cómo México perdió Texas: análisis y transcripción del Informe secreto (1834) de Juan Nepomuceno Almonte*, (México D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1987), p.45; De La Teja "Bexar: Profile of a Tejano Community, 1820-1832," 31.
[83] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," pp. 300-301; Barker, *Life of Stephen F. Austin*, p. 348.
[84] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," pp. 300.

independent Texas statehood. Additional proposals that were included with the correspondence dealt with an exemption for three years from tariff.[86]

When Austin arrived in Mexico City in July, 1833, he found a very chaotic political landscape. Santa Anna had overthrown the Bustamante regime but had placed Valenín Gómez Farías in power. When Austin met Farías, he became so impatient with the diplomatic and political delays that he threatened the President of México by insinuating that the Texans would form a state government with or without his approval. After his confrontation with Farías, Austin wrote a communiqué to the *ayuntamiento* of Béxar requesting they plan to organize a state government.[87]

A month after their argument, Austin was invited to speak with Santa Anna, who was now exercising executive power, on November 5, 1833. Santa Anna agreed to the terms of the colonists including the repeal of immigration, tariff extension, and their request to a trial by jury but did not approve Texas separating from Coahuila.[88]

As Austin made his way to Texas on January, 1834, he was intercepted in Saltillo and placed under arrest for over a year. The letter he sent to the Béxar *ayuntamiento* found its way back to the governor of Coahuila and then to Farías himself who then ordered Austin's arrest. The Bexareños refused to comply with

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[85] Gutierrez Ibarra, *Como México perdio Texas*, p.45.
[86] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 85; Lowrie, *Culture Conflict*, pp. 116-117.
[87] Ibid., p. 86; Barker, *The Life of Stephen F. Austin*, p. 370.
[88] Ibid., p. 86.

Austin's request for incitement to rebellion and sent a copy to the governor of Monclova for further instructions.[89]

With Austin in prison, Anglo Americans exploited this opportunity to spread wider mistrust of Mexicans and México, raising to the surface the hidden level of hatred towards the Mexican government and the Mexicans held by Anglos. The idea of a separate state of Texas within México did not interest them any more. They preferred to be a part of the United States. Many Anglos immigrated to the Texas province with full expectation that it would one day be a part of the American nation.[90]

Austin, by the end of 1834, began to publicly espouse his desire to join Texas to the United States.[91] He further suggested to his cousin, Mary Austin Holley that all Texas needed was more immigration from American colonists while maintaining their own political and social institutions to make it easier for Texas to join the American Union.[92] He was promulgating the idea of separation to his Anglo neighbors while at the same time he was portraying his cause to the Bexareños that he and the other colonists were just trying to uphold the Constitution of 1824 during this moment of political uncertainty in the Mexican capital.

Santa Anna gave the pretext many Anglo colonists were waiting for sixteen months after he took over the Presidency in April 1834. By October 1835, Santa Anna replaced the Constitution of 1824 with a more authoritarian form of

[89] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 145; Barker, *The Life of Stephen F. Austin*, p. 375.
[90] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 159.
[91] Barker, *The Life of Stephen F. Austin*, p. 394.

government. In doing so, he betrayed the Mexican and Tejano liberals who supported him for the presidency. The Anglos saw this as an excellent opportunity to rebel. After Santa Anna's "betrayal" of the Anglo Texans, many of them were unwilling to trust any Mexican. The tendency to judge the Mexicans, or in this case the "enemy," by their national origin instead of political principle threatened to alienate the support of the local Tejanos and quite possibly alter the character and subsequent struggle of the Texan struggle.[93]

Coinciding with the political change in the Mexican capital was the end of the tariff exemption that the Anglos had initiated with Austin's last visit to the capital before his arrest. In January 1835, Santa Anna sent a small force to Anáhuac to enforce the collection of customs there and at Galveston. Anglos soon became disgruntled after discovering that Anáhuac was only charging tonnage fees and Galveston was taxing everything. Instead of settling this matter peacefully, Anglos once again resorted to violence and, in the exchange, a Texan was wounded.[94]

General Martín Perfecto de Cos, military commander of the area, sent a message to the officer in charge of Velasco with news that reinforcements would reach him soon. On June 1, 1835, the courier sent to deliver the message was stopped by angry citizens in San Felipe and his baggage was confiscated. Upon

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[92] Ibid., p. 394.
[93] Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes," p. 82; Josefina Z. Vázquez, "The Texas Question in Mexican Politics, 1836-1845," trans. Jesús F. de la Teja, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 89 (January, 1986): 311-315.
[94] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 91.

hearing the news of reinforcements going to Anáhuac, the citizens elected Travis to remove the soldiers, which they promptly did on June 30, 1835.[95]

The citizens then met in San Felipe two weeks later to decide on a course of action. They wrote an apologetic letter to Cós to atone for past transgressions. Cós was not in a compromising humor. Furthermore, unlike the disturbances in 1832, he had troops in the vicinity to make his point clear. Before meeting with the peace party that came to San Antonio to speak with him, Cós made a reasonable proposition. Cós wanted the Texans who made inciting speeches to their fellow citizens turned over for military trial. The citizens refused and in the eyes of Cós, their efforts in establishing a peaceful solution to the situation were insincere.[96]

This prompted the Anglo citizens to send delegates to the town of Columbia, on August 15, 1835, to discuss the next course of action. By the end of the proceedings, the dye was cast. Even though the Anglos still declared that they were fighting to uphold the Constitution of 1824, they simultaneously declared that since Santa Anna had destroyed the federal union in favor of a more centralized government, they were free to choose their own future. Furthermore, in what can only be perceived as an attempt to acquire more territory, the Consultation delegates agreed to attack the port of Matamoros, which was situated hundreds of miles to the south of the conflict.[97]

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[95] Ibid., p. 91-92.
[96] Ibid., p. 92.
[97] Crisp, "Anglo-Texan Attitudes," p. 83; Anglo-Texans knew by the late 1820's that silver, wool, lead, hides, and beef from Monterrey, Saltillo, and San Luis Potosi were all passing through Matamoros with silver bullion constituting 90 percent or more of the value of exports. Therefore,

During this moment of crisis in the early months of 1835, Tejanos demonstrated their ability to negotiate through these treacherous waters. During the Anglo unrest at Anáhuac, Bexareños were helping their congressional colleagues in Coahuila for control of the state capital. Bexareños wanted the state capital to remain in Monclova. The centralists were trying to move the state capital to Saltillo. By having the state capital remain in Monclova, Tejanos would be in a better position to advance the interests of Texas, including the ones from the Anglo community. The faction that wanted the state capital to remain in Monclova asked for military assistance from the Tejano and Anglo communities. Tejanos refused, opting to pursue a peaceful course of action. The Anglo militias refused because they did not want to be subordinated under a Mexican military commander.[98]

In a demonstration of defiance, some of the Tejano elite, such as Erasmo Seguín and Angel Navarro, refused to lend their homes to Mexican soldiers during Cós's stay in San Antonio. It was a way to voice their displeasure with the conservative regime of Santa Anna. Even though they did not take up arms, they, nevertheless, opposed the conservative government and thus refused to accommodate them while they dealt with the Anglo rebellion.[99]

By the winter of 1835, the final chess pieces were placed on the board, there would be no turning back. The opening moves of the Texas Revolution

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whoever controlled this port, could control the passage of valuable metals and other items from the interior states of Mexico and link them to world markets. From, David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), p. 17-18.

[98] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 166.

were underway when General Cós sent lieutenant Castañeda to retrieve a canon lent to the citizens of Gonzáles for town defense. In the ensuing battle, the Texans rallied and eventually marched to Goliad (formally La Bahía) and San Antonio, ultimately achieving their independence after the Battle of San Jacinto.

Tejano Contributions to Texas Independence

Much has been written about the ensuing struggle for Texas independence but what is left out is the fact that this was not just a confrontation between the Anglo colonists and the Mexican government; Tejanos also had a big part in the secession movement. The difference is that Tejanos first fought for political causes relating to their regional autonomy, whereas the Anglos strictly fought for independence. Tejanos were also tired of the military under Cós and the centralist regime it represented residing in Béxar and wanted them out. Furthermore, unlike the Anglos, Tejanos participated in the rebellion fighting from their own homes and homelands and stood to lose their homes, livelihoods and lives in case of defeat.[100]

Of added importance was the realization that Texas Independence was also a fight, quite literally, between brothers. Three decades before America would experience its own Civil War, Tejano families chose sides and fought bravely to defend their honor and beliefs while others preferred to remain neutral and fled their homes, waiting in the countryside until the bloodshed stopped. In the end, the War for Texas Secession devastated the Texas. Many Tejanos lost

[99] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 168.
[100] Ibid., p. 172.

their homes, possessions, cattle and their lives to both the Mexican and Texas armies.

Those that decided to take up arms fought bravely. Paul D. Lack's Texas Revolutionary Experience, devotes an entire chapter to Tejano contributions during the war.[101] Other authors such as Herbert Davenport's "Captain Jesus Cuellar, Texas Cavalry, otherwise "Comanche" and Alwyn Barr's Texans in Revolt: The Battle for San Antonio, 1835, devote their works to the skirmishes fought in San Antonio.[102] Both mention the bravery and dedication of Tejanos towards the cause for independence. Arnoldo de León's "Tejanos and the Texas War for Independence: Historiography's Judgement," is a poignant attempt to refocus Tejano participations and contributions during the Texas Revolution in order to give them the centrality they so deserve.[103] James W. Pohl and Stephen L Hardin's "The Military History of the Texas Revolution: an Overview," and Hardin's additional manuscript Texan Iliad: A Military History of the Texas Revolution, provide an insightful account from the military perspective on the maneuvers employed by both armies.[104] Of particular interest is the description of Texan dependency on the Tejano's use of the horse for mobile reconnaissance. The Tejano Journey, edited by Gerald E. Poyo provides an

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[101] Paul D. Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience: A Political and Social History, 1835-1836l*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1992).
[102] Herbert Davenport, "Captain Jesus Cuellar, Texas Cavalry, Otherwise 'Comanche,'" *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 30 (July, 1926); Alwyn Barr, *Texans in Revolt: The Battle for San Antonio, 1835*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990).
[103] Arnoldo, de Leon, "Tejanos and the Texas War for Independence: Historiography's Judgement," *New Mexico Historical Review* 61 (April, 1986):
[104] James W. Pohl and Stephen L Hardin, "The Military History of the Texas Revolution: an Overview," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 89 (January, 1986); Stephen L. Hardin, *Texian Iliad: A Military History of the Texas Revolution, 1835-1836*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994).

insightful account of the historical development of the Tejano community and the legacy they gave to future generations that describes the Tejano traditions, identities, military prowess, and strategies they employed to defend their homes in the frontier.[105]

Probably, the most publicized accounts of the Tejano image comes from Jesús de la Teja's A Revolution Remebered: The Memoirs and Selected Correspondence of Juan N. Seguín. Jesús de la Teja along with Jerry D. Robins' master's thesis on Juan Seguín reenact the valor and contributions made by one of Béxar prominent citizens.[106] These studies also utilize a single person to personify the rise and fall of Tejano preeminence.

The eldest child of Don Erasmo Seguín, Juan earned the respect of Anglo Texans by raising a company of thirty-seven men for the ensuing military engagement at San Antonio in 1835. He and his men were indispensable in monitoring the enemy movements during this campaign. Seguín also participated in the storming of Béxar on December 1835 and was with the men in the Alamo during Santa Anna's fateful siege in February 1836. Seguín volunteered to get reinforcements from Goliad and thus managed to escape the bloodshed that followed a few days later by Santa Anna's troops. Seguín was also instrumental in delaying Santa Anna's advance during the famous Runaway Scrape that ensued after the Battle of the Alamo and also participated in the Battle of San Jacinto. In addition, he interred the bodies of the men who fought

[105] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*.
[106] de la Teja, *A Revolution Remembered*,; Jerry D. Robins, "Juan Seguín" (master's thesis, Southwest Texas State College, 1962)

in the Battle of the Alamo and gave them a military funeral. Seguín was elected to the Texas Congress two times and was also the mayor of San Antonio before he was driven under the penalty of death away by Anglos who coveted his position and property. Seguín's personal and political demise heralded the political, social, and ethnic tensions that would shape Anglo-Tejano relations to the present day.

By allowing Anglo Americans into Texas, Tejanos had envisioned a province that would rival those of the interior. The industry and technology that the Anglos possessed combined with the political and cultural knowledge of the Tejano elite made for a promising future. They lobbied for Anglo colonization to encourage growth in population and importance within the Mexican nation. However, the cultural brotherhood that was anticipated by the Tejanos never materialized. In reality, Anglos never made the effort to live near Tejano settlements in Texas and preferred to remain separate in newly founded towns with their own governments.[107]

With the influx of Anglo migration to Texas, the region experienced an increase in population but its economy was slow to recover. Furthermore, the increased tensions with the colonization laws and the change of constitutional government clashed with the aspirations of Tejanos. Tejanos continued to work hard to bridge the divide between the Anglos and the government even as each

[107] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 148.

side hardened their stance. They carried out this duty to the best of their abilities, rarely mentioning the significance of their contributions.[108]

Ramos succinctly describes the changing perception of Tejanos by 1835. Between 1821 and the eve of Revolution, Tejanos began a transformation from a frontera identity that shifted from the isolated "character" of the colonial period to the border condition of the national period. In that period other changes became more pronounced by a growing number of Tejanos, especially along the lines of localism versus nationalism.

Furthermore, he mentions that the turn of events from the fall of 1835 to the spring of 1837 indicate a more complex operation of national, local and ethnic identification than simply Anglo, Texan, or Mexican. Family, friendship, business, violence and history entered into the decision matrix of the Tejanos. Therefore, when considering nationalistic feelings held by Tejanos during this time period, one must realize that being Mexican had different connotations to individuals living in Mexico City and Béxar. Tejanos, still continued to view themselves as Mexican.

After 1836, Bexareños' lives would forever change. Materially the town suffered from the scars of warfare. Ideologically, Tejanos now had to negotiate a new relationship between themselves and those in power.[109] Unfortunately, Tejanos would be negotiating with a group that was culturally and racially different from their own. Due to the heightened ethnic tensions and suspicions

[108] Ibid., p. 149.
[109] Ibid., p. 192.

held by both groups, the Tejanos would begin their negotiations from a subordinated position.[110]

Tejanos were no longer the cultural brokers between the Anglos and Mexico; they were now representatives of the Mexican constituency residing in Texas. Furthermore, to the lament of many Bexareños, San Antonio was experiencing changes of its own. In the coming decades, Anglos would come in ever increasing numbers looking for opportunity and control. With the glaring disparities of the converging cultures, Tejanos began their struggle to hold on to their identity and culture realizing that their contestation for political power and control would be along ethnic lines.

In the following two chapters, I outline the processes of settlement developed by Tejanos over a two hundred-year period beginning from the early settlements to the point of Texas Independence. Tejanos created an infrastructure of civic government, agriculture, animal husbandry, and community as they struggled with changing and political structures, Indian incursions, internal and external warfare, and the changing of their status from proud Tejanos to secondary citizens under Anglo oppression. Yet, despite Anglo repudiation of Tejano culture, they changed little of the infrastructure created by the Tejano people. Consequently, Texas along with much of the American Southwest continues to enjoy enduring social, political and economic institutions Tejanos painstakingly build during their development of the Texas frontier.

[110] Ibid., p. 193.

CHAPTER 3

URBAN PLANNING AND CIVIC GOVERNMENT

Early Developments of the Tejano Region

The history of Texas, from the Tejano perspective, has not been a part of the official historical narrative of the State. It has long been characterized as a story waiting to be uncovered by the academic community and made public, moving it beyond the genres of *corridos*, family stories, and contested lives and into the history text books. The state of Texas is a region born of Spanish and Mexican political, economic and social structures. Its prosperity today is a direct result of Tejano perseverance, pride, and citizenry that grew out of a passion and desire to succeed despite its secondary status in larger Spanish and Mexican politics.

Growth of the Tejano region was often politically and economically overshadowed by incessant wars in Europe during the mid 18th and early 19th centuries, resulting in limited internal growth and few new settlers from New Spain. After Mexican independence in 1821, Tejanos continued to find themselves at the mercy of seemingly arbitrary decisions by ministers in México City. Tejanos, nonetheless, managed to stay above these fluid and often turbulent times and continued to develop the region from the lower Rio Grande

Valley to present day San Antonio in the west, Goliad in the east, and Nacogdoches in the northeastern fringes of the Texas province.

Although development of the region was slow, Tejanos continued to create networks of political and economic growth between settlements and ranches. The instability of development throughout the northern portion of Mexico combined with increased French influence in the Louisiana region by 1700 and the rapid growth of the United States after the Revolutionary War made it imperative in the minds of the Tejano elite to develop a sound and secure system of resupplying and defending their settlements. For instance, the community of Bexar numbered less than 2,600 souls up until the mid 1820s, and the population was significantly less in the rest of the settlements in Texas. Thus, the basic structure of Tejano settlements in Texas can be described as defensive. Presidios, or military outposts**,** had to be constructed within gunshot of each town to protect the population.[1]

To make matters even more difficult, the settlements were not evenly located across the frontier line. In fact, most were literally scattered throughout the province of Texas. The Tejano region consisted of three distinct and separate areas—The communities in Nacogdoches, the presidial and rancho communities from San Antonio de Béxar to La Bahía, and the widely scattered

[1] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 6; Béxar Archives, Census 1820; Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, p. 79; Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. II: 303; Almaráz, *Tragic Cavalier*, p. 6; By 1820, the U.S. population had increased to 9,600,000 while the population in New Spain had managed to grow only 6,200,000. From Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 274.

rancherías between the Nueces and the Río Grande rivers.[2] The vastness of the region, the low population density, and the harshness of the Texas environment were significant factors in the development of a strategic plan to protect and develop the northern province in the 18th century.

Tejano Settlements

The cultural characteristic that defined the Texas frontier during the 1700s and 1800s was a militaristic one. These martial origins date back to 1689, with La Salle's ill-attempt to claim Texas for France.[3] When the Spanish government began to recognize the seriousness of French intentions on colonizing the Mississippi Valley, it felt obliged to protect its coast, in particular the Seno Mexicano, which comprised the coast of Tamaulipas and sections of South Texas.

Spain conceived the idea of first establishing missions, which served both as religious and economic centers, with surrounding presidio garrisons in East Texas near the Sabine River, as the best way to settle Texas without investing enormous amounts of capital. The idea was to convert the native population to Christianity and introduce Spanish morals while at the same time using the Indians as a source of labor to help settle the territory. More importantly, both presidios and the mission settlements monitored closely the movements of potential rivals in the region.[4] Eventually, the missions were abandoned by the Crown due to the expense involved in maintaining them and the inadequate

[2] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 6; Juan Gómez-Quiñones, *Roots of Chicano Politics, 1600-1940*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, c1994), p. 45.
[3] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, pp. 72-76.; John, *The Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds*, p. 163.

indigenous population that was to serve as a labor resource. Nevertheless, the inability of the royal treasury to support these outposts was overcome by political necessity.[5]

By the turn of the 18th century, the Spanish government was compelled to return to the missions they had abandoned in an all out effort to hold and colonize Texas.[6] Spanish imperial interests in the Gulf Coast forced officials in New Spain to begin preparations for the reoccupation of Texas.

Philip V, (1700-46), the first of the Bourbon monarchs, issued the decree under which San Antonio was established.[7] It was not long after the Royal decree that 59 Canary Islanders made their way to Texas arriving on March 9, 1731 and founded the Villa of San Fernando, renamed later as San Antonio de Béxar.[8] The creation of San Antonio was followed by Goliad in 1749, and Nacogdoches in 1779.[9]

The preceding series of events clearly indicate that from its inception, Texas was a quasi-militarized zone against foreign intrusion. A high percentage of settlers in Texas were in fact soldiers compared to ranchers or farmers. The colonists that settled in Texas had either military experience or were recently retired from military service and agreed to retire in Texas as part of a severance package they received from the Spanish government. The first settlers to the

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[4] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 195.
[5] Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, p. 54.
[6] Ibid., p. 54.
[7] Ibid., p. 3.
[8] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 135; Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, pp. 192-193, Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. II: 298-299; de la Teja, *San Antonio de Béxar*, p. 18.
[9] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 78-85, 148-149; Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, p. 54, 98; Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 149.

area were called *ciudadanos armados* or armed citizens.[10] Despite these tenuous beginnings, Tejanos did not take long in establishing a semblance of stability. Whatever hesitancies the Spanish monarchs may have had towards Texas, one thing is certain, the Spaniards were remarkable empire builders. Beginning with the first *entrada* in the late 17th century, the Iberian nation, with only a handful of people, successfully implanted Spanish culture, religion, laws, and patterns of life to the Texas frontier.[11]

Urban Planning and Town Government

In keeping with the Royal Ordinances of 1573, town settlements such as San Fernando (San Antonio) in 1731, had to comply with strict codes for the geographical location of the town to other townships, the town's limits or boundaries, and the physical location of the town's streets, government buildings and residential properties.[12] The ordinance also provided specific instructions that dated back to a compilation code of laws entitled *Recopilación de las leyes de los reinos de las Indias*, which provided specific orders for the establishment of municipal governments for the administration of internal affairs of each town.[13] Development of the Texas province followed the typical pattern of Spanish development where under each viceroy there were a series of *municipios*, a pattern very similar to the county and state structure of governance in the southwestern portion of the U.S. today. Governing each *municipio* was an *ayuntamiento*, or political body, some of who were elected. The elected officials

[10] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 43.
[11] Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, pp. 1,3.
[12] Cruz, *Let there Be Towns*, p. 64.

appointed others. The *ayuntamiento* was headed by the *alcalde* and his *regidores*, or council members, a treasurer, and other appropriate officials. The *cabildo*, normally coinciding with a *municipio* and its *ayuntamiento*, was the corporate structure recognized by Spain. Politically the *municipio* would encompass one or more *villas*, or towns, outlying *ranchos* and *rancherías*, presidios, and missions. This combination of spatial layout and founding government is best seen through the records on the founding of the *ayuntamiento* of San Fernando in 1731.

According to Tijerina, before the municipal government of San Fernando could be founded, city planning and zoning had to be established. The preliminary marker for the center of the *villa* was the nearby springs that were used for drinking and irrigating. Captain Juan Antonio de Almazán, the man appointed to establish the town, spent the next four days sectioning off the streets to make sure it included a site for the church, main plaza, municipal hall, as well as other buildings. The unit of measure used was a *vara,* which was equal to 32.9 inches. Consequently, the city limits of San Fernando were 2186 by 2186 *varas* or 5993.28 square feet, with the quadrilateral being a perfect square situated northeast by southwest.[14] In keeping with the tradition of the Reconquest customs, Almazán provided each family with a town lot.[15]

Once Almazán completed his survey on July 6 1731, he officially completed the transfer of the settlement by giving titles of nobility to the new

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[13] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 51.
[14] Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, pp. 70-71; Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. II: 303.

settlers. From now on they would be called “Hijos Dalgo”, persons of noble lineage, entitled to all the privileges granted by the King of Spain.[16] Captain Almazán proceeded to carry out the instructions of the Viceroy by creating the political life of the town.[17] Because of the small population, the Viceroy allowed alterations to the *Recopilación* by allowing the first members of the *ayuntamiento* to be appointed by Almazán on July 20.[18] Six men were appointed to the position of councilman; one to the position of sheriff or *alguacil mayor*, with a salary attached; another was appointed to the position of secretary and notary public; and finally, one was appointed to the position of *Mayordomos de los Propios* or administrator of the public lands.[19] The succeeding town council members would be elected by the former *ayuntamiento* members. The culminating event in the founding of the settlement and establishment of the *cabildo* of San Fernando was the first election in Texas for the two positions of *alcalde ordinario* or justice of the peace on August 1, 1731. The viceroy approved these positions two months later.[20] At last, the first civil settlement in Texas was established and the first members of the town council were recognized by Spanish officials. In other areas of the province, such as in East Texas and La Bahía, the settlements were still too small to justify an *ayuntamiento*; however, when these communities grew sufficiently, they

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[15] Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, p. 65; Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. II: 302; de la Teja, *San Antonio de Béxar*, pp. 34-36.
[16] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. II: 307.
[17] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. II: 307; Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, p. 73.
[18] Tijerina, “Tejanos and Texas,” p.53.
[19] Ibid., p. 53.
[20] Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, p. 309.

successfully lobbied to obtain an ayuntamiento of their own. In the meantime, it was only a matter of time before the *Villa* of San Fernando would be renamed in honor of the Presidio de San Antonio de Béxar constructed with the purpose of defending the first municipality in Texas.[21]

Town Government

By the early 1800s, the structure of the cabildo remained relatively unchanged in Béxar despite the many rebellions and future filibustering expeditions that would occur in the province during the next decade. This basic unit of the Texas government was still a derivative of the Spanish municipality, which used as local control a city-region jurisdiction. Based on the ancient Roman municipium, the municipality was well suited for the protection of settlers grouped around a presidio in remote areas subject to hostile attack. *Municipios* in Texas were well suited for the rigors of the frontera. Just as it had served Spain during the Moorish invasion of the Iberian Peninsula, *municipios* in Texas performed admirably in localities where Indians replaced the Moors.[22] As settlers moved north from Mexico into Texas, the *municipio* strengthened its grasp on the surrounding area. In time, the hostile environment solidified the belief of the *municipio* in the mind of the Tejano--a concept they could find solace in--because with the settlers came the Spanish *ayuntamiento* institutions which had traditionally governed and protected the *municipios* of earlier generations.[23]

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[21] Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, pp. 77-78.

[22] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 26.
[23] Ibid., p. 49.

By the early 1820s, Béxar and La Bahía were fully developed *ayuntamientos* with full membership and both communities provided stability and able leadership during this time period.[24] Nacogdoches also received recognition of *ayuntamiento* status in 1827 and announced Samuel Norris to be their town's first *alcalde***,** or mayor. The new *ayuntamiento* was installed in the home of the new *alcalde* and official notification of the results was sent to the area's presidial commanders and state authorities.[25]

As previously mentioned, the customary role of the *ayuntamiento* was the preservation of order in urban planning, criminal and civil policies, and in fiscal finance. Once a *villa*, or town, was established, the community's citizens organized town councils. Elected by their constituents, the *ayuntamiento's* responsibility was maintaining the stability of the town and its surrounding jurisdiction. In keeping with Spanish traditions, the most important position of the *ayuntamiento* was that of the *alcalde* who had the powers of lawmaker, judge and policeman.[26] The *alcalde*, or mayor, with the approval of the *cabildo*, managed the affairs of the *villa* through ordinances, relied on by the *Recopilación* that called for the preservation of order and promotion of public health and cleanliness.[27]

Prohibited activities such as gambling, vagrancy, and social disorder were closely monitored. Although jails were in poor condition, the *alcalde* made

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[24] Ibid., p. 64.
[25] Bexar Archives, Nacogdoches Ayuntamiento, Minutes, June 24, 1827; Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas." p. 64.
[26] Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, p. 76; De La Teja, "Bexar: Profile of a Tejano Community, 1820-1832", 15.

weekly visits to report the number of people in jail, their offenses, and the length of their incarceration.[28]

The responsibilities of the *alcalde* were much greater than a modern day mayor. The governor of the province held his actions accountable.[29] The *alcalde* was responsible for the daily activities of the *ayuntamiento* including lower ranking officials; but, his most important function was his duty as magistrate granted by the *Recopilación*. As magistrates, alcaldes presided in civil and criminal cases that were tied to their jurisdiction. The majority of the cases involved the illegal slaughter or sale of livestock. [30]

The *alcalde* performed his magistrative duties with great earnestness. However, Tejanos often complained of the workload and responsibilities placed on one person and successfully lobbied for an elected position to ease the judiciary commitments of the *alcalde*. The new elective position had to meet the same requirements as an *alcalde* but was to be independent of the former administrative position. Furthermore, municipalities were allowed one additional judge per each increment of 5,000 people.[31]

The *ayuntamiento* was also responsible for monitoring the recreational activities of the town as well as licensing professionals such as doctors or lawyers within its jurisdiction. Promoters of cockfights, public dances, and raffles

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[27] Ibid., p. 76; De La Teja "Bexar: Profile of a Tejano Community, 1820-1832", 17.
[28] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 49; De La Teja "Bexar: Profile of a Tejano Community, 1820-1832", 15.
[29] Ibid., pp. 49-55.
[30] Joseph B. Wilkenson, *Laredo and the Rio Grande Frontier*, (Austin: Jenkins Publishing Co., 1975), pp. 109,117,126; Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America*, p. 168; Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 82.
[31] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," pp. 85-86.

first had to purchase licensing rights to conduct the event or else face fines or imprisonment. Professionals, such as doctors and lawyers, also had to receive the approval of the *ayuntamiento* before establishing their business in these communities.[32]

Furthermore, permanent committees such as the sanitation committee or the *Junta de Sanidad*, were sanctioned by the *cabildo* to oversee the community's sanitation efforts and to further maintain the public health and order of the community. The sanitation committee was responsible for monitoring the public space areas and reporting any discrepancies they might encounter to the *ayuntamiento*. The sanitation committee had legal authority to fine or arrest violators. Areas inspected included irrigation canals, streets, plaza, and market places. The depth of control by the sanitation committee can be seen in ordinances in Béxar that prohibited the throwing of dead animals into the ditch. Citizens were also responsible for cleaning the streets in front of their houses. Furthermore, the *síndico procurador*, or municipal treasurer, was required to inspect all foods for sale in the city to make sure they were of good quality.[33]

These committees were of vital importance not only in the daily maintenance of order, but also in times of crisis. For example, when the frontier of Texas experienced a small pox epidemic in 1831, *La Junta de Sanidad* provided the crucial coordination required to contain the disease. They were instrumental in the planning and implementation of immunization procedures for

[32] Ibid., p. 78.
[33] Cruz, *Let There Be Towns*, pp. 74-75; Fane Downs, "The History of Mexicans in Texas, 1820-1845" (Ph.D. diss., Texas Tech University, 1970), p. 198.

the citizens of Béxar and for promulgating advisory notices to the communities of Goliad, Nacogdoches, and the Anglo communities in East Texas.[34] When the epidemic reached Béxar, the Junta was activated to establish a plan of action. After nominating the executive committee, the sanitation committee's first act was to divide the city in sections with a representative responsible for a section of the town. Medicine was to be distributed free of charge to those who could not afford to pay and sold it at affordable prices to others. The course of action taken by the committee was the inspection of each quadrant to report on the number of people infected with the disease, the administration of vaccines to the citizens and periodic meetings to decide on the next possible course of action.[35]

Other committees were also active in preserving order. For example, in Béxar, one such committee was the *Ronda*. A *ronda* was a commission of six to ten men who were required to patrol the streets at night between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m. twice a week to provide security for the *villa*.[36] These committees and governmental structures provided the infrastructure for much of the governmental structure of Texas today.

[34] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 104.
[35] Downs, "History of Mexican Texans," pp. 177-179; De La Teja, "Bexar: Profile of a Tejano Community, 1820-1832", p. 115.
[36] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 78; De La Teja "Bexar: Profile of a Tejano Community, 1820-1832," 15.

CHAPTER FOUR

ECONOMIC POLICIES, INDUSTRY, AND DEFENSE

Fiscal Planning

In matters dealing with public finance, each *ayuntamiento* was responsible for preparing its annual revenue plan and submitting them to the state government for approval. The *Plan de Arbitrios,* as it was called, regulated the licensing fees for conducting business in each of the *ayuntamientos*. Merchants had to pay an array of taxes that included fees on the transportation and sale of goods in the *villa*, the sale of livestock, entertainment, or the use of communal lands for grazing.[1]

The preparations of these plans and their yearly submissions to the state authorities during the 1820s suggest that the communities in Texas were stable entities during the transitory period of governmental change in México. México at this time was experiencing a political transformation when Emperor Iturbide abdicated his throne in México and its citizens eventually voted for the establishment of a Republic instead of continuing with another form of centralized government. Evidence that this political unrest in México did not affect Tejano political and economic stability is seen through the yearly *Plan de Arbitrios* from Béxar, which retained the same taxations for conducting business as in years

[1] Andrés A. Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas under the Mexican Flag*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1994), p. 36.

past. There were no fluctuations in licensing fees that would imply financial difficulties or concerns by the *ayuntamiento*.[2]

Livestock Regulatory Procedures

An important fiscal subsidy regulated by the *ayuntamiento* was the regulation of the sale and slaughter of livestock. Consequently, an important by-product of this fiscal regulation was the introduction of ranch life and range techniques to Anglos; in other words, the image of the cowboy we all enjoy today is a direct result of Tejano contributions to the American cattle industry and range resource management.[3]

The origins of regulation of the cattle industry dates back to the early explorations of Texas during the late 17th century. During these *entradas* it was discovered that the terrain was well suited for grazing. Beginning with Alonzo de León's ill-fated search for the colony of La Salle in 1689, trailblazers left behind various breeds of cattle for propagation that thrived on the Texas landscape.[4] As settlers started trickling into the region, they began establishing *ranchos* for the sole purpose of raising cattle instead of agricultural crops.

Besides being suited to the Texas environment, the *rancho* fit smoothly into the concept of frontier settlement and was compatible with the defensive nature of the Iberian municipium.[5] In case of attack, which happened periodically, it was easier to defend one's livelihood by moving cattle to a secure

[2] Ibid., p. 37; Béxar Archives, Béxar Ayuntamiento to Provintial Deputation, Oct. 20, 1823.
[3] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, pp. 78-88.
[4] Ibid., pp. 78-88.
[5] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 143.

location than to stay behind to protect agricultural crops. Furthermore, it was less labor intensive than growing staple goods.

Systematic ranching began in San Antonio in 1720 when the Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo first introduced large numbers of horses, mules, cattle, and sheep into the province in 1721-1722.[6] Soon after came early land unit designations for purposes other than ranching that could be purchased from state authorities. Families would receive units of land depending on the type of industry they professed to practice. For example, each family could purchase a *labor* (177 acres) if they planned on cultivating crops or a *sitio* (4,428 acres), which was sold for the sole purpose of stock raising.[7] Not surprisingly, most chose to purchase *sitios* instead of *labores.*

By the 1800s there was a great abundance of horses and cattle in Texas that offered an obvious source of income for the Tejanos. Income was derived from the roundup, drive and market of the animals to the United States through Louisiana and Natchez.[8]

To control the trading of livestock, Tejanos used a contractor to purchase livestock for town markets. The use of a contractor facilitated the regulation of the livestock trade from purchase to slaughter.[9] The reason why contractors were employed was due to substantial rustling activities of ranch owners' cattle by the ranch hands. Contractors consequently helped curb the illegal trading and

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[6] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 246.
[7] Richardson, Anderson, Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, p. 61.
[8] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 147.
[9] William H. Dunsenberry, "The Regulations of Meat Supply in 16th Century Mexcio City," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 28 (February, 1948): 41-52.Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 151.

slaughtering activities by directing the sale of cattle to the town's *ayuntamiento*. As soon as a contractor arrived in town, he had to pay a tax to the *alcalde* for the number of cattle he sold at the marketplace or slaughterhouse.[10] In this manner, accurate figures on the amount of cattle, breed, and brands in the vicinity were tracked.

Anglo colonists pursuing interests in raising cattle adopted many of these livestock regulatory procedures. One of the first pieces of legislation from Governor José Salcedo to reach Stephen F. Austin's community dealt with the regulation of livestock.[11] Soon the colonists began adopting policies using contractors as well.

Range Resource Management

In addition to the transfer of livestock regulations to the Anglo communities, the American colonists also benefited from the transmission of husbandry and range resource management skills of the Tejanos. Anglos were astonished at the dexterity by which Tejanos could easily rope an animal with a lasso.[12] One commented on how a Tejano could dart like a bird of prey into the midst of mustangs and at thirty meters rope a mustang with unerring certainty.[13] Others marveled at the ability of Tejanos to ride beside a bull, grab the bull's tail, and throw him off balance.[14]

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[10] Dunsenberry, "Regulations of Meat Supply," 41-52; Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 160; Falk, *Last Years of Spanish Texas*, p. 86.
[11] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 160.
[12] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, p. 50.
[13] Downs, "History of Mexican Texans," p. 57; Mary A.Holley, *Texas*. 1836; reprint, (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1985), pp. 127-128.
[14] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, p. 50.

Tejanos also reinforced the concept of using mules and oxen as pack animals. Anglos often remarked on the techniques used by Tejanos to efficiently train and domesticate these animals to transport goods and supplies. They were surprised to discover how easy it was to train wild oxen by pairing them up with gentle oxen to speed-up the process. Some were surprised at the rapidity of the Tejano muleteers as they loaded their pack mules. One Anglo observer noted "Two Mexicans will load 25 mules in less time than my Co. will saddle each his own horse and get on parade."[15]

Tejano *vaqueros* introduced the concept of range management through the use of the round-up or *rodeo*. They taught Anglos how to capture wild horses or livestock out in the open range. The technique called for a group of *vaqueros* surrounding the intended stock and herding them to a make shift pen built earlier to hold the strays. Following the round up, *vaqueros* would separate and keep the strays they wanted and let the rest go. They would then brand the herd they kept in order to show proof of ownership. Finally, monthly drives to markets in the United States would commence in Béxar and La Bahía with as many as 2,000 head of cattle making the journey. Almost 20,000 head of cattle were transported in this manner on an annual basis. In addition to cattle, horses, mules and burros were also driven to the United States but in fewer manageable numbers.[16]

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[15] William A. McClintock, "Journal of a Trip Through Texas and Northern Mexico in 1846-1847," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 34 (July, 1930): 241; Dudley G.Wooten, *A Comprehensive History of Texas, 1685-1897*, 2 vols. (Dallas: William G. Scarff, 1898), p. I: 595; Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 160.
[16] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 164.

Water Law Conservation

One of the most important legacies Tejanos bequeathed to future generations was the development and implementation of water regulatory procedures for the inhabitants of Texas. Drawing on tradition, Tejanos created local water systems, which they governed based on principles of ancient law and in so doing, instituted the first adaptation of European civilization to the semiarid environment of Texas.[17] Before establishing presidios, *villas* or *rancherías*, Tejanos first assessed the availability of water to sustain the local community. They recognized that water was the life-blood of the land and as such, was considered to be a very precious commodity. The availability of clean water was so important that local water management laws were regularly enforced.[18]

The land-water concept was introduced to Texas with the very first *entradas* to the territory.[19] During the Espinosa-Olivares-Aguirre expedition in 1709, which ultimately led to the future establishment of missions and presidios in East Texas, the expeditionary leaders commented on the potential of establishing a town near the San Antonio River to serve as a midway point. They had a favorable impression of the river as a promising site for future settlement.[20] During other reconnaissance, Spanish explorers were always careful to observe lands that were suitable for potential irrigation or that could be reasonably extracted from nearby streambeds.[21]

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[17] Ibid., p. 106.
[18] Ibid., p. 107.
[19] Ibid., p. 107.
[20] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 110.
[21] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 107.

One of the most pervasive influences of Spanish traditions in Texas water laws was the public nature of water ownership.[22] The *Recopilación* codes that many Tejanos used for city planning and civic government also addressed the management of water among the inhabitants in the New World. It stated that the water would fall under the authority of local authorities such as *ayuntamientos* and allowed for the common law of the region to have ultimate precedent in all cases not covered by the *Recopilación*. In other words, the local Tejano communities had full authorization to regulate their local water supply as they saw fit. Through time, local water management became a distinctively Tejano tradition.[23]

The citizens of Texas all contributed to the construction of *acequias* or aqueducts. Most contributed by performing the required labor while others donated building materials or paid for the labor that was required. The result of this community collaboration was the development of *acequia* systems across the frontier. One of the most elaborate systems was located in Béxar where six missions benefited from the construction of irrigation systems that were capable of irrigating as many as 900 acres.[24] Considering the time, energy, and expense it took to construct these feats of engineering, one can appreciate the responsibilities and powers of enforcement with which the *Junta de Sanidad* was

[22] Ibid., p. 110.
[23] Ibid., p. 110; Wells A. Hutchins, "The Community Acequia: Its Origin and Development," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 31(January, 1928): 265.
[24] Edwin P. Arneson, "Early Irrigation in Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 25 (October, 1921): 127.

entrusted to insure the aqueducts and irrigation systems remained in proper working order.

When Anglos eventually took control of Texas they incorporated many of the water laws already established and perfected by Tejanos. Jurisdiction remained within the local community with the only alteration being the transfer of enforcement privileges to the county court. County courts would now legally enforce and monitor the irrigation systems from the time they would be erected, repaired, and cleaned.[25] The smooth transition of these workable water laws can be attributed to the ancient traditions passed by the Spanish to the New World and refined by the Tejano community.

Frontier Defense—Vatir y Perseguir

The frontier of Texas enticed the first few settlers with stories of valuable resources just waiting to be exploited. According to the *ayuntamiento* of Béxar, the region had enough rivers, lakes, and streams to sustain life in great numbers.[26] The areas further north of the *ayuntamiento* promised the entrepreneurial trailblazers with opportunities of finding quarries containing lead, silver, copper, and even iron.[27] Moreover, the semiarid climate made the region suitable for raising cattle in large numbers.

Despite the promises of great wealth, the early settlers quickly discovered that their humble communities were situated hundreds of miles away from their capital. Compounding the situation was the sobering reality that the ranching

[25] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 110.
[26] Downs, "History of Mexican Texans," p. 9.

industry resulted in these small communities being isolated even from each other. Communication between *rancherías* and the *villa* could be easily severed by Indian incursions to the settlements. In spite of the harsh conditions frontier life guaranteed the early settlers, most of the communities accepted their fate unflinchingly. In their efforts to manage their economic interests in the frontier, Tejanos confronted the hostile elements of the Texas *frontera* and as a result, extended their authority over this area as well.[28] The outcome of this lifestyle was the eventual metamorphosis of a proud hard-riding soldier equipped to handle any mission regardless of the circumstances.

Tejano militia volunteers could readily trace their military ancestry to the early settlers of the region. As sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of presidial soldiers, Tejano volunteers acquired the skills necessary to not only survive but to enforce their will on the frontier.[29] Their military lineage immersed these communities in the importance of organization, leadership, and espirt de corps. As isolated entities, the Tejano villas did not have the luxury of waiting for reinforcements from the state capital to handle every potential threat they faced. Furthermore, each community needed to work together, as one, to confront and defeat any potential threat or face the possibility of extermination. As a result, military philosophy and tactics were closely studied, scrutinized, and passed on to future generations within family units. Tejano troopers were a proud community of volunteers and professional soldiers who understood the realities

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[27] Ibid., p. 9; José M Sánchez, "A Trip to Texas in 1828," trans. Carlos E. Castañeda, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 29 (April, 1926): 259-260.
[28] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 140.

of the frontier, and, thus, took their profession very seriously. They knew that foolish mistakes could invariably shorten a man's life.

The end result was the gradual development of a man capable of effecting long-range pursuit. His skill with a horse provided him with the mobility, flexibility and advantage to track, harass, and pressure his adversary virtually at will and at his own choosing. More importantly, his military tactics taught him that advantage and survival meant taking the fight to the enemy.[30]

Tejanos began improving on their cavalry tactics with the inception of the *comañía volante* or flying squadrons. This type of military organization dates back to 1713 when Viceroy Duque de Linares ordered the landowners of the *frontera* to organize "flying companies" to resist Indian attack.[31] A half a century later, Commandant General of the Northern provinces, Teodoro de Croix, formalized this process by having professional soldiers train the local volunteers and create formations of seventy hard-charging troopers.[32] The military philosophy was as simple as it was brutal – conduct extensive campaigns into enemy territory, maintain the offensive pressure until victory was secured—in short they were ordered to *vatir y persguir,* to strike and pursue. Defensive measures were cast aside, as it only resulted in mutual stalemate.

The Tejano community received an additional boost when the *Compañía Volante de San Carlos de Parras* arrived in Béxar. Among these troops were Tlaxcalan soldiers who played an important role turning the gears of the

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[29] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, p. 49.
[30] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag*, p. 79.
[31] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 175.

evolutionary wheel another notch when they introduced the idea of the *caballada* or cavayard*,* a strategy of utilizing ten horses to each soldier. The rationale behind the *caballada* was to incessantly pursue an adversary thereby extending military campaigns beyond their current limits. With ten mounts per man, which accompanied the squadron on campaigns, the soldiers could patrol indefinitely with the only limit being placed on the food the mounted men could carry.[33] The advantages of this introduction were significant. Seventy men could now mask their troop strength through the use of these extra horses and appear to number in excess of several hundred. This was a crucial deceptive tactic employed by Tejanos pursing a larger force than their own. The enemy undoubtedly had to think twice before deciding to counter attack. Another risk would be having their position compromised if they opted to send scouts to ascertain the actual troop strength of the Tejanos. Furthermore, time and distance were no longer hindering factors as troopers could readily saddle-up another mount and continue on their high pursuit.

Pursuing the enemy is also something worth noting in the character of Tejanos. These were fearless men who considered it an honor to defend their territory. At times, patrols of only three men traversed the countryside. There were also many instances of one-man patrols scouting the area for days at a time monitoring Indian movements or guarding against encroachment from the United States.[34] Due to their success, flying squadrons became the logical

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[32] Chipman, *Spanish Texas*, p. 193; Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 226.
[33] Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag*, p. 80.
[34] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 176.

choice to utilize when tracking fugitives fleeing from the law.[35] A classic example that describes this concept occurred in 1825 when an Anglo immigrant, James Stuart, murdered a traveler on the road between Laredo and Goliad.[36] The commander of Laredo ordered a four-man unit to go out and arrest Smith. When the four-man squad arrived at the scene of the crime, three men remained behind to guard the body while the remaining trooper successfully caught up with Smith and, after a brief struggle, arrested him and brought him back to Laredo for trial.[37]

By regulation each soldier was required to possess a musket and two pistols, a sword, a lance, a saddle, blanket, bridle, reigns, spurs, and other accoutrements.[38] Even if military equipment was in short supply, it did not diminish the responsibility or the reputation of these citizen soldiers. Taking the fight to the enemy, as was previously mentioned, required a game of high stakes bluff, which was as important as offensive élan. These military and personal strategies captured the character of the Tejano that not only tamed but also remade the Texas landscape, creating a rich and powerful region in high demand that was once the stepchild of two previous ruling entities.

As México made the transition from a centralist state to a Republic, more demands were placed on local *ayuntamientos* to deal with incursions affecting their jurisdiction. This process was formalized in 1825 when Rafael Gonzáles became the Commandant General of Texas. He ordered local *ayuntamientos* to

[35] Ibid., pp. 176, 178.
[36] Ibid., p. 179.
[37] Béxar Archives, Antonio Elozúa to Felipe de la Garza, June 19, 1829.

form their own militia to effectively respond to any Indian attack and encouraged the continual training of cavalry tactics and pursuit.[39] For Tejanos, these new regulations did not come as a surprise nor were they shocked to discover that they would have to rely on themselves for the defense of the frontier. Providing for their own defense dated back to the founding of their *ayuntamientos*. On the contrary, what the new regulations did was legitimize the militia and its civilian leaders as integrated elements of a formal military structure.[40]

Authorized to organize as they saw fit, the Tejanos continued to adopt the offensive strategy for defense. In addition, ten-men forays between La Bahía, San Antonio, Laredo, and the Lower Rio Grande was readily approved by the local *ayuntamientos* and immediately went into effect. Indian camping grounds were no longer safe as Tejanos began planning and implementing military strikes into these areas that resemble the search and destroy missions by the United States in Vietnam 149 years later. The intent of these campaigns was to effectively go out and harass the enemy in their own "backyard."

A classic example of Tejano planning and cunning was a successful attack by 150 mounted Béxareños led by *Alcalde* Gaspar Flores and former *Compañía Volante* Commander Nicasio Sánches into Tawakoni territory.[41] Presumably, Tejanos employed an array of tactics to confound and confuse their adversaries. As mounted soldiers they had the advantage of conducting a series of flanking maneuvers. In addition to their *escopeta*, a favorite Tejano tactic was

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[38] Moorehed, *The Presidio*, p. 191.
[39] Béxar Archives, Rafael González to José Antonio Salcedo, March 20, 1824.
[40] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 83.

deploying their lasso to ensnare an enemy brave and then dragging him to his death.[42] Due to the unreliability of gunpowder in those days and to the awkwardness of discharging a musket on horseback, Tejanos also preferred to use a nine-foot lance to attack their adversary.[43] The weapon not only proved to be effective and reliable—since it could never misfire, but the psychological impact must have been awesome and very difficult to overcome – imagine a lance being delivered by a weapons platform eight to ten feet tall, weighing hundreds of pounds and traveling at a speed in excess of 20 miles an hour! The success of the raid demonstrated the effectual transition of knowledge derived from *Comañía Volante* tactics as well as the effectiveness of the Tejano military structure of command, namely, the ability of citizen soldiers to be ably led by their own elected officals.[44] By 1830, the local militia had completely replaced the presidial defense companies in matters dealing with local defense.[45]

Tejanos began teaching the Anglos the principles and tactics of the *compañía volante* once Stephen F. Austin was granted permission to establish colonies in Texas.[46] But for many years their training fell on deaf ears. Anglos clung stubbornly to tactics learned in the eastern United States. As a result, they could not comprehend the offensive strategy of the Tejanos. To Anglos, it seemed too advanced. They preferred to rely on a defensive approach by

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[41] Ibid., p. 85.
[42] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, p. 50.
[43] Ibid., p. 50.
[44] Béxar Archives, Gaspar Flores to Ramón Músquiz, Sept. 19, 1830; Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texans," p. 85.
[45] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 85.
[46] Ibid., p. 195; Henderson K. Yoakum, *History of Texas from its first settlement in 1865 to its annexation to the United States in 1846*, 2 vols. (New York: Redfield, 1855), pp. I: 223-226.

having the enemy come to them instead of aggressively pursing him, thus, ultimately forfeiting the advantage of surprise and timing of the attack to the aggressor.

It was not until the illegal convention of San Felipe de Austin that the Anglo colonists seriously considered the idea of establishing their own state militia based on offensive tactics and assimilated many of the military traditions from the Spanish, Mexican and Tejano period.[47] Anglo commanders stressed the need to find bold, insightful and aggressive individuals that resembled the temperament of Tejanos; moreover, their mission philosophy changed from reaction to pro-action. Anglos now considered it to be in their best interest to safeguard the frontier inhabitants by committing to offensive patrols instead of reacting to enemy attack. Much of their reasoning was influenced from years of observation of the Tejano's ability to meet the demands of the harsh *frontera*.

The end result was the creation of the Texas Rangers based on the military tactics of reconnaissance, maneuver, and offensive spirit Tejanos had employed since the 18th century. To make this transition possible, Tejanos were allowed to serve in the original formation of the Ranger companies. Undoubtedly they passed on their knowledge to the new Anglo recruits before being excluded from this elite company in later years.[48]

The very description of the Ranger's mission profile and military equipment is Tejano in origin. Ranger squadron's patrolled the same areas

[47] Barker, *Life of Stephen F. Austin*, p. 349
[48] Walter P. Webb, *The Texas Rangers; A Century of Frontier Defense*, 2d ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965), p. 70.

Tejanos patrolled in the 1820's. Furthermore, Ranger regulations required each man to possess the exact same weapons Tejanos employed. Furthermore, Anglo *vaqueros* needed to replace their American made saddle with one that was designed by Mexicans since it provided better comfort and was better suited to meet the needs of the *frontera*. Anglos eventually adopted the system of the *caballada* or cavayard.[49]

To fully appreciate how successful Tejano military contributions were one must look at the immediate transition of range skills Tejanos imparted to Texan Anglos after the War for Texas Independence because their legacy quickly spread to other parts of the United States. During the Mexican-American War, American troops observed and copied the cavalry techniques of the Texas Ranger squadrons who taught the American officers the value of horsemanship.[50] When Sam Houston was elected to the United States Senate, he strongly advocated the development of deploying small cavalry patrols based on the Tejano model to protect American settlers from further Indian incursions.[51] Among the officers who learned the range techniques and principle of mobility were none other than U.S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and William T. Sherman; future generals of the Civil War who undoubtedly left their imprint on mobile warfare based on the offensive employed by Tejanos.[52] U.S. military historians have had ample time studying and perfecting the effective results of these strategies and

[49] Ibid., p. 79-82.
[50] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 203.
[51] Llerena Friend, *Sam Houston, The Great Designer*, (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1954), p. 257.
[52] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 203.

since then have cultivated and fermented the idea of the offensive élan instilled by Tejanos during their campaigns in Texas during the 17th and 18th centuries that gathered momentum during the Civil War in the 1860's. These tactics were further refined during Pershing's pursuit of Villa in 1915 and during Patton's drives in northern France in 1944, to the creation of the First Cavalry Air Mobile Division in the 1960's and culminating with the ultimate flanking maneuver deployed by the VII corps during Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

CHAPTER 5

EPILOGUE

Hispanophobia, as David Weber termed it, found its loudest and harshest rhetoric in Texas during and especially after the War of Secession, with Austin as one of its leading contributors. Austin, now a representative of Texas, in his writings requesting aid for the War of Texas Secession in 1836, drew sides along ethnic lines. He characterized the struggle in Texas as a conflict waged by the Spanish-Indian and Negro races against civilization and the Anglo American race. Stephen F. Austin carefully omitted the fact that many Tejanos had joined the revolutionary cause and were fighting and dying alongside the Anglos.[1] The bloodshed spilled in the Alamo, Goliad, and San Jacinto had no parallel anywhere else in the Spanish Southwest. The aftermath of the war left a bitter hatred towards Tejanos by Anglo Americans.[2] One Texas historian, quoted years later after the battle of San Jacinto, stated, "the extermination [of the Mexicans] may yet be necessary for the repose of this contintent!"[3]

Weber mentions that after their victory, Anglo American rebels controlled not only the territory of Texas but also the writing of its history and, thus, portrayed themselves as a heroic superior race of men – a ploy typical of the dominant group constituting an attempt to disguise their chicanery.

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[1] Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 339.
[2] Ibid., p. 339

Nevertheless, the first Texas historians elevated the rebellion to a moral struggle and a war for principles.[4] The result of these distortions and serious omissions of Tejano contributions in early Texas history retarded the study of Tejano influences in Texas and more importantly, served as a useful tool to keep Tejanos and future Mexican Americans in their place.

The years following the Texas Revolution, and the Mexican War for that matter, brought only frustration and turmoil for Tejanos. For Mexicanos who considered Texas to be their home during the 1820s, a great number of them lost their rights to land ownership by 1850. Anglo American immigration to Texas swelled immediately after the War of Secession, making Tejanos the distinct minority in their native land. Despite their smaller population, Tejanos continued to remain large enough to not only provide a degree of continuity but also to slowly rebuild a power base in Texas as they struggled to maintain the society and livelihood they had built over the previous century.[5]

Establishing this power base would not be easy. The prominent factor that hindered many Tejanos from enjoying their rights as citizens of the Republic of Texas was the ethnic conflict that took hold in the region with the arrival of Anglo Americans. Furthermore, their ability to carve out a space for their social and economic lives was becoming even more difficult. Many Tejanos who had fought and contributed generously to the Anglo cause found themselves persecuted as enemies of the new Texas Republic simply because they were

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[3] Ibid., p. 340.
[4] Henry S. Foote, *Texas and the Texans*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Thomas Cowperthwait, 1841), p. II: 27; Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, p. 339.

Mexican. One prominent figure who encapsulates this phenomenon is Fernando de León of Victoria who supplied arms and ammunition for the Texan cause and was later jailed and forced into exile for ten years. In the process of his persecution, he lost his home, land and belongings.[6] Many Tejanos, some of whom supported the Anglo presence in Texas while others did not, such as Carlos de la Garza who resided near Goliad, Juan N. Seguín of San Antonio, and Vicente Cordóva of Nacogdoches, turned against the Anglos in self-defense.[7]

The town of Goliad was plundered and burned to the ground soon after the Anglo-Texan army arrived from San Jacinto in 1836. Feeling euphoric after their victory over Santa Anna, and having a penchant for hatred toward anything that was Mexican, Anglo troops destroyed and plundered the town and forced Tejano families to flee to the countryside. Mexican residents in Nacogdoches suffered the same fate. Tejanos in East Texas had their livestock, grain and belongings robbed by entrepreneuring Americans arriving in Texas.

In San Antonio, military officers often considered fateful decisions without considering the ramifications these would have on the citizens. For example, in 1837, fearing that the Tejano population would encourage the Mexican army to march on their settlement, General Felix Huston, Commander-in-Chief of the Texas Army, ordered Juan Seguín to evacuate and burn the city.[8] Seguín vehemently protested the order and pleaded to President Sam Houston to spare

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[5] Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 317; Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 195.
[6] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 196; Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, pp. 119-122.
[7] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, pp. 94-104.
[8] Joseph M. Nance, *After San Jacinto; The Texas-Mexican Frontier*, 1836-1841, (Austin: Univeristy of Texas Press, 1963), pp. 17-20; de la Teja, *A Revolution Remembered*, p. 111.

San Antonio. Bexareño success in preventing the destruction of their community marked an assertion, albeit in a limited form, of the political power they would continue to wield in the ensuing years.[9] Unfortunately, the political power was limited in scope and worked best in areas with large concentrations of Tejanos. In the outlying *despoblados*, or underpopulated areas, Tejanos were often at the mercy of Anglo control.

After the Treaty of Guadalupe in 1848, Mexicans, at best, became second-class citizens and at worst, were targets of hatred prompted by racial discrimination.[10] Across the Texas frontier, many Tejano families lost their title to their lands from fictitious lawsuits, and sheriff's auctions for failure to pay back taxes. Near Corpus Christi, Anglos elevated the art of thievery to egregious acts of violence when they raided Mexican ranches in the Upper Nueces area and killed every adult male before taking over and fencing in their ranches.[11]

To escape the escalating level of violence, many Tejano families resettled and found refuge along the lower Río Grande River. Before the Mexican-American War, the Río Grande region had a high Tejano concentration because few Anglo settlers had ventured that far south. Although contested by both México and Texas the area between Río Grande and Nueces Rivers remained unsettled and was considered to be a demilitarized zone by both countries. Once Zachary Taylor made his way to the Río Grande River, however, new

[9] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 199.
[10] David J. Weber, *Foreiners in their native land; historical roots of the Mexican Americans*, with a foreward by Ramón Eduardo Ruiz, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), p. 143.
[11] Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*, p. 53; Tijerina, "Tejanos and Texas," p. 320.

settlements such as Brownsville, Edinburg. Río Grande City, and Eagle Pass developed along the future Texas-Mexico border.

Other Tejanos did not have the option to resettle and were forced into relocating. A classic example involved the citizens of Matagorda County who uprooted entire Tejano communities. One newspaper plainly told the story of their deeds:

> MATAGORDA—The people of Matagorda county have held a meeting and ordered every Mexican to leave the county. To strangers this may seem wrong, but we hold it to be perfectly right and highly necessary; but a word of explanation should be given. In the first place, then, there are none but the lower class or "Peon" Mexicans in the county; secondly, they have no fixed domicile, but hang around the plantations, taking the likeliest negro girls for wives; and thirdly, they often steal horses, and these girls too, and endeavor to run them to Mexico. We should have rather have anticipated an appeal to Lynch law, than the mild course which has been adopted.[12]

Despite these setbacks, Tejanos did fight to regain a measure of assertive control. Francisco Ruiz (1836-1837) and Juan Seguín (1838-1840) were elected to the Texas senate during this transitionary period of Anglo control. Furthermore, José Antonio Navarro (1838-1839) and Rafael Calixto de la Garza (1842-1843) served in the House of Representatives.[13] All four worked hard to defend the interests of Mexicanos residing in Texas. One of Seguín's first acts in the 1838 sessions was the support of a bill to provide relief for the widows and orphans slain in the defense of the Alamo. In 1840, Seguín also requested that

[12] Frederick L Olmsted,. *A Journey Through Texas; or, A saddle-trip on the south-western frontier; with a statistical appendix* (New York: Dix, Edwards & Co., 1857; reprint, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978), pp. 502-503.
[13] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, 77.

the Laws of Texas be translated into Spanish for the benefit of his constituency. He articulated the seriousness of this issue by proclaiming that Tejanos were among the first to sacrifice for the Revolution. The disasters they faced in the midst of the firestorm were insurmountable; yet, they were destined to be the last ones to enjoy the fruits of their efforts.[14] His proposals, which would have passed without discussion today because of the valor and commitment of these men to our country, failed in the Texas congress.

Despite their hardships, Tejano settlements and continuity remained a permanent fixture in Texas. In San Antonio for example, Tejanos continued to have a voice in the city's decision making up until the 1890's.[15] Communities along the Río Grande also prospered due to the high density of Mexicanos residing in this region.

Other peaceful accommodations took place, particularly in San Antonio where marriages took place between Anglo men and daughters of the Tejano elite. David Montejano referred to this accommodation as a "peace structure" which allowed the victors to maintain law and order without the use of force. The accommodation did not alter the traditional authority of Tejano society, but, rather, placed Anglo Americans atop the existing political, social, and economic hierarchy.[16]

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[14] Ibid., p. 78.
[15] Ramos, "From Norteño to Tejano," p. 202; Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*, p. 40.
[16] Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*, pp. 34-34; Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, p. 80; Terry G. Jordan, "A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change in Texas, 1836-1986," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 89 (April, 1986): 386.

Despite having to rebuild again, Tejanos would continue to leave an invaluable imprint in Texas history. Just as they did during the beginning of the 18th century, beginning with the establishment of small settlements along the frontier, Tejanos would once again continue to form their traditions based on the experiences of their forefathers. As Spanish colonists intent on protecting the frontier region for Spain then Mexico, the settlers discovered their special connection to the region of Texas; and in this process they became Tejanos.[17]

Originally moving into Texas as *ciudadanos armados*, Tejanos stood ready to defend their region and community from foreign intruders and from Indians who resented their presence. During these formative years, Tejanos became a self-sufficient community that did whatever was necessary to survive.

They depended on each other for their survival and looked at the land as a continuing source of nourishment and income. They drew on the ranching traditions of their Spanish ancestors and perfected their equestrian skills into an art form that they used for work and warfare.[18]

By the mid 18th century, Tejanos had developed modest economic gains by establishing trade agreements in Coahuila and other southern districts. Furthermore, the advantages of trading with Louisiana in the east opened illicit trade to the world markets of France and England. By the 1820s Tejanos saw American colonists and their technological advances in agricultural farming as an excellent opportunity to help settle and bring prosperity to the region by tying Texas to markets in Mexico and the United States.

[17] Poyo, *Tejano Journey*, p. 125.

Tejanos understood that to effectively protect their economic interests in Texas, they needed to establish forms of control on a local as well as state and national levels. The municipality introduced by the Spanish monarchy to Texas defined and defended the local political, economic, and social interests, while at the same time tying Tejanos to the Spanish and Mexican governments.[19] Tejanos never intended to separate themselves from México. Yet the pressure by the United States to take Texas away by either peaceful or martial means, the endless stream of documented and unauthorized immigrants coming into the region, and the Tejano pursuit for local autonomy, caused a definite break in loyalties.

As citizens of Texas, and subsequently the United States, Tejanos found their positions in the public, social, economic, and political forum increasingly marginalized. As a result, many Tejanos experienced threats and discrimination from American settlers coming into Texas who had little to no appreciation for Tejano claims to the region. These racist sentiments grew stronger after the War for Secession. When confronted with these hostile conditions, Tejanos drew on familiar historical traditions to protect their communities while allowing for their advancement.

Some Tejanos opted to defend themselves, their families and their livelihood when attacked. Others wanted retribution. The Córdova revolt that sprang-up in East Texas was the result of constant American intrusion to Tejano owned lands. Even though the revolt lasted months in duration and taxed the

[18] Ibid., p. 126.

fledgling Republic, it was not successful in containing the influx of settlers wanting to enter Texas from America. The Córdova revolt guaranteed that future insurrections would not last very long. Once they would end, Tejanos endured greater repression as punishment for going against the supposed integrity of the Anglo's word.

Despite the strong feeling of hostility experienced by both groups during this time period, there were still a few Tejanos who had the opportunity to speak on behalf of their constituents. Individuals such as Seguín and Navarro took up the Mexicano cause in the Texas Senate and House of Representatives. For Tejanos serving in Congress, they took it as their duty to defend the cultural traditions and legacy of their citizens.

The story of Tejanos is a story of survival and accomplishment. It is a story of a people who always looked inwardly at themselves and their families for solutions that would help them maintain the integrity, the traditions, and the honor of being a Tejano. On balance, Tejanos were never overwhelmed by the obstacles they faced but rather sought the ways and means to surmount them. Had this not been the case, their story would have never made it beyond the 1700s. The fact that their story persists to this day personifies their strength and their resolve. Defending the frontier through able administration or on horseback, Tejanos served the interests of Spain, México, Texas and themselves with admirable skill. Always watchful, always vigilant, the Tejano legacy still echoes

[19] Ibid., p. 127.

across the frontier, patiently waiting for the next person willing to hear their *llanto* retold once more.

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